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The identity of the professional interpreter

How students construct the identity of the professional interpreter in an Italian higher education institution

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Kings College, University of London

Faculty of Social Sciences and Public Policy

The identity of the professional interpreter

How students construct the identity of the professional interpreter in an Italian higher education institution

Alan James Runcieman

A thesis submitted in the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor in Philosophy

September 2015

Author's Declaration

This is to certify that:

1. this thesis comprises only my original work towards the degree of Doctor of Philosophy;
2. due acknowledgement has been made in the thesis to all other material used;
3. this thesis does not exceed the word length for the degree;
4. no part of this work has been used for the award of another degree;
5. this thesis meet's the University of London's Human Ethics committee (HREC) requirements for research conduct.

Name: Alan James Runcieman

Signature:

Date:

Dedication

To Annie

Without whom none of this would have been possible.

I miss you.

Acknowledgements

To Simon, who supported me so much throughout these years and helped me realise this PhD. I know Annie would be so proud of him.

...

To Sarah, for calling me every day and urging me on, even though she wasn't quite sure exactly what I was doing.

...

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...

To Eva, for her deep love, patience and understanding.

...

To my supervisors, Simon Coffey and Constant Leung, who guided me. Especially to Constant who gave me invaluable advice in the Auberge.

Abstract

The identity of the professional interpreter

How students construct the identity of the professional interpreter in an Italian higher education institution

Although professional interpreters are increasingly important in today's world, helping minority language speakers in other nations in their pursuit of basic human rights, there has not as yet been any substantial empirical research into the institutions that train them. This research therefore aimed to fill this gap by carrying out narrative research, from an ethnographic perspective, to provide emic insights into how students construct the professional interpreter's identity over the period of their first year in the institution.

The research drew on *small story* narrative research, which analyses small, often fragmentary, co-constructed narratives as they emerge in situated talk. The analytical frame adopted was *narrative positioning analysis*, which analyses narratives on three levels: the level of the actual narrative told, the level of the tellers in the moment of the telling, and the level of wider Discourses that shape the first two levels.

Narrative positioning is concerned with how narrators position themselves and others, as well as the characters in the narratives they tell, towards the social world. This positioning is then analysed to draw conclusions about the Discourses that shape their perceptions of the social world, providing insights into how they construct their social identities.

By drawing on ethnographic data about the institution, certain Discourses were identified as being important in shaping student identities as they emerged in the narratives told. Furthermore, these Discourses provided insights into how the identity

of the professional interpreter was constructed, and how students related their own identities to that construction, as well as the resources they perceived as being necessary to become interpreters.

The research then aimed at identifying those Discourses that played an important role in shaping the image of the professional interpreter's identity and how students navigated them in their first year in the institution. My analysis was ultimately directed at critiquing those Discourses, in order to make suggestions as to how the institution might better train students to become future interpreters.

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Chapter one

Introduction and background to the research

This research took place, at Bologna University's 'Advanced school for interpreters and translators in modern languages', in Italy (henceforth Sslmit).

Over the period of their first academic year (October 2012 – July 2013), I interviewed five student participants, in individual and group sessions, in order to trace their changing perceptions of both the institution and their individual progress towards becoming professionals in the field of interpreting, a goal they had clearly expressed in the volunteer stage of the research (see chapter three, section 3.2).

The data collected in these interviews was analysed through a *small story* approach to narrative research, taken from an *ethnographic perspective* (see chapter two, for a detailed account of both). However, before I describe my theoretical approach, I first give some background information relevant to the reasons behind engaging in this research, as well as an introduction to the field of interpreting and interpreting studies and its relevance to me as a researcher.

In the first part of the following chapter, I describe the role professional interpreters play in today's society (section 1.1), the gap in empirical research into their professional training and my approach to addressing that gap (section 1.1.2), as well as how I approached the research (section 1.1.3), and the research questions I posed (section 1.2). I then go on to look specifically at the institution where the research was carried out (section 1.3).

In the second part of the chapter, I give the historical background to the development of *interpreting studies* (section 1.4), I outline the growth of *community interpreting* and compare and contrast it to *conference interpreting* (section 1.4.1), and I examine the complex role of the community interpreter (section 1.4.2). I also look at the

changing theoretical and methodological developments in approaches to both interpreting and translation over the last fifty years (section 1.5).

In the last part of the chapter, I provide some autobiographical background about the reasons why I became interested in this area of research (sections 1.6 – 1.6.1) and my own personal views, and how they may have impacted on the research carried out (section 1.6.2).

1.1 The role of the professional interpreter

Professional interpreters play an important role in society today,

... (helping) the institutions of multilingual societies to function.. (by supporting) immigrant communities in courts, hospitals, police and immigration services. Properly trained, interpreters thus contribute to safeguarding human and democratic rights.

(European Commission report, 2006: 8)

Professionally trained interpreters are important therefore in helping language minority inhabitants in other nations overcome barriers of communication in the pursuit of basic human rights (healthcare, education etc.). Moreover, the right of these minority groups to speak their own languages is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human rights, evidenced in Article 2.1, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10th December, 1948, and which states

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this declaration without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, *language*, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.’

(Cited on The United Nations website¹, my emphasis)

¹ <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>.

Nowadays, given the diffuse nature of world migration since the early 1990's, and a globalization which has 'altered the face of social, cultural and linguistic diversity in societies all over the world' (Blommaert & Rampton 2011:1),

...the provision of interpreters becomes a legal obligation on the part of all societies, (and) by extension, the right to communication via interpreters becomes a basic human right, as the right to language...

(Angelelli, 2012: 255)

Despite the important role that interpreters play in contemporary societies however, the academic community has given little weight to date on researching interpreter institutions in higher education (see section 1.1.2, below), whose aim it is to train students in the profession. The present research therefore aims to fill this gap by engaging in qualitative research into one such institution.

1.1.2 Background to the research focus

Important changes have occurred in interpreting studies in Italy (and in other countries) over the last few decades, both in education and research, which have had important repercussions for my own research and the questions I posed (see section 1.2). I now go on to outline these in detail and their ramifications for this research.

The first change regards the institutions' curricula (particularly with regard to first-cycle degrees²). Today's students are no longer a-priori 'early bilinguals'³ uniquely concerned with learning a set of interpreting skills as in the past (Zannirato, 2008), but rather students still in the process of acquiring their target languages, principally in the 'confines' of the institution (Rosiers et al, 2011). The ramifications of this are that first-cycle degrees, such as the one under investigation in this research, place a heightened emphasis on language learning as part of their curricula, something that emerged through *Discourses* in the institution. Discourses are 'socially accepted

² A first cycle degree refers to the standard three-year degree (equivalent to a bachelor degree). Second cycle degrees refer to post-graduate degrees.

³ Defined as individuals who acquire two languages in the early stages of their development.

associations among ways of using language, of thinking, valuing, acting and interacting’ (Gee, 1999: 17), (see section 2.10 for a detailed explanation of the concept). These Discourses were seen as having a significant influence on interpreter-student identities (see chapters 4 and 5, for an analysis of the data relevant to this).

The second change regards research in interpreting studies. In recent years, research in the field of interpreting has been looking more and more towards the *social* (emphasising human interaction), drawing on sociolinguistics, feminist studies, sociology, and social theory among others for deeper understandings about the processes in *interpreted communication events* (henceforth ICE⁴), (Angelelli, 2006). However, this focus on the social dimension has been primarily concerned with professional practice in the field, and not on the institutions that are responsible for training interpreters. For example, a major journal in the field of interpreting and translation studies, *Translation and Interpreting studies* (John Benjamins), has focused on the interpreter’s social role and identity, but principally in the ICE (i.e. court interpreting, medical interpreting etc.), and nothing of note on the same processes on interpreter-students in training institutions.

Although much has been written in the field of interpreter training, ‘empirical research is arguably still in its infancy’ (Kelly and Martin, 2009), and the empirical research that has been carried out has been principally focused on ICE’s and the lessons that can be learnt from experiences in the field for training in the institution (see Routledge’s *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, Special issue: 2014, vol 8:3). Furthermore, part of the reason for an absence of empirical research on the institution is ‘due to the fact that interpreter research has focused too intently on the cognitive mechanics of the process...’ (Kelly and Martin, 2009: 299, drawing from Pöchhacker) and little on the socio-cultural processes effecting students’ development.

The ramification of this then in my own research, was to take an *ethnographic perspective* (see section 2.18), to explore students’ lives in the institution in their first

⁴ I use this term to refer to any event where an interpreter is interpreting between interlocutors with different languages.

year from a social and cultural perspective, as they navigated institutional Discourses in an attempt to become experts in the field of interpreting.

I now give a brief summary of my research approach in this study (which I develop in chapter two).

1.1.3 Summary of Research approach

My research drew on *small story* narrative research (see chapter two, sections 2.7 - 2.8) to investigate a group of students as they negotiated institutional Discourses in their first year. From a theoretical perspective I took narrative to be an epistemology (see section 2.2), a way of knowing about the world and ‘a mode of thought, communication, and apprehension of reality’ (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012: 15).

For the analysis of my narrative data I adopted the analytical framework of *narrative positioning analysis* (Bamberg, 1997, 2003, 2004; De Fina, 2013; Georgakopoulou, 2000; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008, Georgakopoulou, 2013) to examine the turn by turn construction of narratives as they emerge between interlocutors in situated dialogue, and the wider Discourses they draw on (see section 2.13, for a more detailed explanation of this analytical approach).

As previously stated, as I was interested in how my participants constructed their social world through their narratives and how they positioned themselves and others in it, I chose to take an ethnographic perspective in the research (see section 2.18), drawing on ethnographic data beyond the narrative episodes analysed (i.e. based on observations in the field, see Appendix B) to investigate the wider community of interpreter-students (see section 2.14, for a detailed explanation of how this approach was applied theoretically).

1.2 Research questions

In my research, I posed the following questions:

1. Over the period of their first academic year, how do interpreter-students perceive and negotiate Discourses in the institution, and how do these Discourses affect their constructions of the identity of a professional interpreter and the resources to become one?
2. How do these Discourses also shape their identities as interpreter-students and affect their stated future goals?

I now give an overview of the institution where the research was carried out, and then go on to give some historical background to the field of interpreting as an academic subject.

1.3 The institution

‘The Advanced School for Translators and Interpreters in Modern Languages’ (Sslmit)⁵, at the University of Bologna’s Forlì campus in Italy, was founded as a department in 1989. It was the first to be established by the University of Bologna in Romagna (the area South of the regional capital, Bologna, and part of the Emilia-Romagna region), part of a multi-campus project which has since seen further expansion into the main towns in the region; Ravenna, Imola, Cesena and Rimini. It is also one of only two institutions in Italy to be accredited by the ‘Conference Internationale d’Instituts Universitaires de Traducteurs et Interprètes’ (CIUTI)⁶, and holds a high reputation for excellence both nationally and internationally. Competition is high for a place on the undergraduate degree course at Sslmit. In 2012 there were 1,140 applications with a maximum quota of only 182 places, and over 10 percent were second time applicants⁷.

⁵ Since 2013 the department’s name has been changed to ‘The Department of Interpreters and Translators (D.I.T)’

⁶ CIUTI was established in 1995 and requires members’ teaching staff to introduce professional experience and provide training that is relevant for the profession.

⁷ Faculty statistics, part of a departmental report published on the department website (2014) <http://corsi.unibo.it/Laurea/MediazioneLinguisticaInterculturale/Pagine/default.aspx>

Sslmit offers both first-cycle and second-cycle degrees in interpreting and translation. The first-cycle degree is termed ‘Mediazione Linguistica Interculturale’ (Intercultural Linguistic Mediation), and offers modules in both interpreting and translation, where the interpreting modules focus specifically on *community interpreting* (see section 1.4.1, below), and the second-cycle degree specialises in either translation or interpreting, specifically *conference interpreting* (Ibid).

Italian universities offer a wide range of first-cycle degrees in interpreting and translation, approximately 31 degrees in 29 universities throughout the country.⁸ This is in contrast to the UK for example which offers considerably less at a first-cycle level (around 15)⁹ and the majority at a second-cycle degree level (notably MPhil and MA’s). Also notable, among Italian first-cycle universities, is a minimum requisite of 2 foreign languages, including Italian (for non-Italian citizens), whereas most UK universities only require one foreign language.

Students who apply for the first-cycle degree at Sslmit are expected to be proficient in a modern European language which is not their own –English, French, Spanish or German– at approximately B2 level (according to The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). There is a written entrance test for each language (and Italian if the student is not a native speaker) held between the first and second weeks of September with a subsequent selection of the highest scoring students for the entrance numbers allowed. Subsequent to gaining entrance to the department, students are required to choose a second and third language for their undergraduate studies. The second language must be one of the European languages listed above (with the additional possibility of Russian and Chinese¹⁰) and the third any of the following: Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Finnish, Portuguese, Russian, Bulgarian or Slovakian.

In line with the guidelines developed to improve and promote transparency among European institutions of higher education, the institution’s website¹¹ states that it

⁸ As listed on the Italian Ministry of Education’s site, http://offf.miur.it/pubblico.php/ricerca/show_form/p/miur

⁹ See the Complete University Guide at <http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/>

¹⁰ Chinese was only a third language option until 2012.

¹¹ See <http://corsi.unibo.it/Laurea/MediazioneLinguisticaInterculturale/Pagine/Presentazione.aspx>.

follows the ‘Dublin Descriptors’¹² in defining the learning outcomes that students are expected to achieve after completing their first-cycle degree (namely in relation to, ‘Knowledge and understanding’, ‘Applying knowledge and understanding’, ‘Making judgements’, ‘Communication skills’ and ‘Learning skills’). Under the heading ‘Knowledge and understanding’, Sslmit specifies that its students are expected to have acquired a C1 level in two foreign languages and a ‘livello intermedio’ (an intermediate level, usually associated with a B1 level) in a third.

Furthermore, the institution states that with regards to ‘Applying knowledge and understanding’ the graduate:

- is able to express themselves fluently and spontaneously in two foreign languages, and with relative fluency and spontaneity, in a third foreign language;
- is able to apply the skills and knowledge gained in the field of intercultural and interlingual mediation between the Italian and at least three foreign languages;
- knows how to produce written texts in Italian and in 3 foreign languages.

(Translated by myself from the institution’s web-page¹³, p3)

I refer to these requisites further on in my research, in particular in my data analysis (see chapter 5, section 5.2.5).

With regards to the actual curricula¹⁴, all first year students are obliged to take a module in both ‘Italian literature’ and ‘Italian language and linguistics’, as well as two ‘language and mediation’ modules in their first and second languages of study, (translating between those languages and Italian). They then have a choice between

¹² Presented in 2003 and adopted in 2005 as the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area.

¹³ <http://corsi.unibo.it/Laurea/MediazioneLinguisticaInterculturale/Pagine/Presentazione.aspx>.

¹⁴ See the following web page for a detailed description of curricula:

<http://corsi.unibo.it/Laurea/MediazioneLinguisticaInterculturale/Pagine/PianiDidattici.aspx?CodCorso=8059&AnnoAccademico=2015&Orientamento=000&Indirizzo=000&Progressivo=4>

three modules in three areas of study, ‘literature’ (specific to their first language of study), ‘European history’, and what is termed as ‘intercultural and gender studies’. Modules in students’ third language of study begin in their second year but introductory courses are available in their first year.

The actual content of course curricula is decided between the relevant teacher and his/her head of department, however detailed course plans are not made public (making an analysis of that content extremely difficult in this research), and teachers are only obliged to publish the general contents of their courses on the departmental website. These are often very broad and general descriptions, as the following example from a first year course in ‘language mediation’ shows¹⁵.

Course contents

The *Mediazione* module will be divided into two parts: Part 1: rephrasing from Italian into Italian, English into English, English into Italian and Italian into English; exercises based on various materials regarding cultural aspects of English-speaking countries and vocabulary related to specific topics (as described in Part 2); Part 2: simulations of interpreter-mediated exchanges between English native speakers and Italian native speakers in daily contexts (at the airport, at the restaurant, etc.) and analysis/discussion of verbal and nonverbal behaviour, and language registers.

(See Chapter 5, section 5.4.4, where I refer to this course content in relation to my data analysis.)

In the more general context of how the institution presents itself to prospective students, Sslmit positions itself as being one of the top institutions in Italian higher education with respect to training professional interpreters. In a promotional video on the internet the ‘preside’, the school’s director, clearly states that

¹⁵ Course description 2014, see <http://www.unibo.it/en/teaching/course-unit-catalogue/course-unit?annoAccademico=2014&idComponenteAF=376067>

Sslmit is a centre of national and international excellence, and as such its entrance requirements are extremely stringent.

(Translated by me from Italian)¹⁶.

Students who manage to enter the institution therefore are clearly positioned as being exceptional in some way, having passed the institution's stringent entrance requirements and being part of a centre which is both nationally and internationally recognised for its excellence. Web 2.0¹⁷ platforms for social media suggest that this image of the School is pervasive. An on-line forum dedicated to Sslmit has requests for information about the institution from prospective students, which suggest that it is generally perceived as being nationally renowned,

Is it true that they are actually the best Italian schools to prepare you in interpretation and translation?

(Translated by me from Italian)¹⁸

A Facebook page, set up by the institution itself, advertises preparatory courses aimed at helping students prepare for the entrance exam which suggests that the exam is generally positioned as being notably difficult, requiring study and training to pass.

pre-course SIMULATIONS SSLMIT 2013

The student organization "Student Point " is organizing the 5th edition of the preparatory courses and simulations for the admission test to the three-year degree for aspirants to SSLMIT in Forlì. The pre-courses are free and are supported and organized by students of the faculty.

(Translated by me from Italian)¹⁹

¹⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9M0m5hxbUCk>

¹⁷ Web 2.0 describes World Wide Web sites that emphasise user-generated content, usability, and interoperability.

¹⁸ <http://forum.studenti.it/lingue/974774-sslmit-forla-2012-pareri-consigli.html>

¹⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/events/485924764825785>

A group of Sslmit students on the popular website ‘Tumblr’, calling themselves ‘Sslmitians’, post regular, comic and self-deprecating portraits of the typical Sslmit student. In one such post the writer describes the first days of a new student in the following way,

Freshmen generally move in herds, and their look can be said to be halfway between the bold, having got in, and frightened, because indeed they got in.

(Translated by me from Italian)²⁰

Gaining entrance to Sslmit is positioned as being a cause for celebration but also of trepidation, echoing the school director when he describes the entrance requirements as being stringent due to the school having a national and international reputation for excellence. The self-defined ‘Sslmitian’, appears to express his pride in passing the entrance requirements, but also the pressure to perform to corresponding high standards of excellence.

1.3.1 A sketch of a student’s first week in the institution: Orientation.

Having passed the entrance exam, students’ initial experiences are outlined here to provide a rough ethnographic *snapshot* of their first week.

When students arrive at the institution they are provided with a guide to the institution’s organisation and services, entitled “Campus of Forli. User instructions” (see appendix C). This guide identifies the figure of the ‘Degree Programme Secretariat’ (Ibid: 9) whose role is to ‘provide for help and assistance in the compiling of... (a student’s) study plan and for the assessment of the prerequisites’ (Ibid). The guide also identifies the figure of the ‘tutor’ who ‘work(s) with the degree programme secretariats and deal(s) with the activities of support to the services addressed to

²⁰ <http://sslmittiani.tumblr.com>

students' (Ibid) providing information and advice at specific times during the week (in timetabled receiving hours).

In their first two days in the institution (in the first week of October) students are introduced to these figures in a general introductory series of talks²¹. Moreover, on the first day they are given a welcome speech from the director of the institution as well as the director of the first cycle degree, which lasts approximately one hour. After which there are presentations of the various language departments and a general outline of their syllabuses for the first academic year, which also continues on the morning of the second day. Courses then begin approximately four days later, in the second week of October, and finish around mid December. The average student's day starts at 9am and finishes at 7pm, with on average two hours break in between.

I now go on to talk about the historical background of interpreting, and the development of the field of interpreting studies as an academic discipline.

1.4 Historical background to interpreting studies

The diversity of languages has, throughout history, created the need for methods of communication between speakers of different languages. Interpreting – the oral transfer of messages between speakers of different languages – is thus one of the oldest of human activities, and the role of the interpreter is arguably one of the oldest of the professions

(Gentile et al, 1996: 5)

Interpreters have been around since ancient times. The Egyptians, Greeks and Romans all made reference to their use at some time or another (Ibid). However, the identifiable figure of the interpreter was only visible in certain settings, usually in high-level international encounters, such as meetings between rulers, delegations to other countries, and in more recent times, in the 19th century, as part of the spread of

²¹ <http://corsi.unibo.it/Laurea/MediazioneLinguisticaInterculturale/Avvisi/2015/09/inizio-lezioni-e-presentazione-del-corso-di-laurea-mediazione-linguistica-interculturale-sede-di-forl-aa-20152016.htm>

colonialism throughout the world. Interpreters however, were not seen as professional figures with a specific set of skills and expertise until the 20th Century (Baigorri-Jalón: 2014).

The first specific role of the *professional* interpreter emerged through the need for international interpreting in the 20th century, and in particular in the context of international conferences and meetings. The *conference interpreter* then was the first clearly recognised professional figure in the field of interpreting (Baigorri, 2015). Interpreters were increasingly employed after the First World War with the development of international relations, in particular in the League of Nations. However, the most important advances came in the wake of the Second World War, at the Nuremberg war crimes trials. In these trials, instigated to investigate Nazi atrocities, new technology allowed experiments with *simultaneous interpreting* (translating people's talk in real time by shadowing their utterances directly), where interpreters sat in soundproof booths and relayed the courtroom talk through earphones. Before this, interpreters worked mainly in *consecutive interpreting* (where speakers had to pause after a period of speech to allow the interpreter to relay it in the other language). With the advent of this technology then, and the increased use of simultaneous interpreting, conference interpreters became firmly established and grew exponentially, particularly in organisations such as the United Nations (Gentile et al, 1996).

The figure of the *community interpreter* (or dialogue or liaison interpreter as he/she is also referred to) emerged under quite different circumstances. Increased international business contacts and mass migration, particularly to America, but also to many other countries after the Second World War, meant that interpreters were required to mediate between increasingly diverse communities. For migrants this often meant communicating from minority languages to the dominant language of the host nation.

As community interpreting forms the basis of interpreting courses in the first cycle degree at Sslmit²², conference interpreting only being studied at a post-graduate level,

²² All interpreting courses are based around interpreting in the community, in hotels, restaurants, hospitals, courts of law etc.

I look at some of the differences between the two in the next section where I explain the growth of the former in particular over the last twenty years.

The different role that community interpreters play in interpreting is further investigated in section 1.4.2, as it evokes different (and often competing) Discourses about the identity of the professional interpreter, which also emerged in my research data (see chapter five).

1.4.1 The growth in Interpreting studies: Community and conference interpreting.

The interpreting and translation disciplines have seen an exponential growth in the last twenty years, and

...there has been a proliferation of specialized translating and interpreting courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. These courses, which attract thousands of students, are mainly orientated to training future professional commercial translators and interpreters and serve as highly valued entry-level qualifications for the translation and interpreting professions.

(Munday, 2001: 6)

This proliferation of specialised translating and interpreting courses can be seen in part as a consequence of further major geographic displacements of individuals over this period (as after the Second World War, see section 1.4), but also due to the pursuit of better education, commerce, trade, and intermarriage (among others). These geographic displacements meant that individuals often found themselves in new countries where they did not speak the language and where, as part of a linguistic minority, they required interpreting and translation services for many of their daily activities, for example in relation to health, education and legal services. In such circumstances the need for interpreters in *community interpreting* was, and still is, particularly elevated.

Community interpreters work, as the name suggests, in varied community settings, such as in hospitals, government agencies, schools, court houses, police stations and immigration offices. They can work *simultaneously* or *consecutively* (see section 1.4), and are required at times to carry out *sight translations*²³ (often of forms and documents). Community interpreting is considerably different from conference interpreting however, as the following factors show:

- the physical proximity of interpreter and clients. Community interpreters are often physically present, unlike conference interpreters who work at a distance, in booths;
- an information gap between the clients. Community interpreters are often concerned with sharing information between people from different language communities, and not translating long stretches of monological speech as conference interpreters are often required to do;
- a likely status differential between clients. Community interpreters often have to work with people with different socio-economic, cultural and educational resources;
- working as an individual and not as part of a team. Conference interpreters often work in 30-minute shifts, exchanging places with colleagues over the whole interpreting event.

(Elaborated from Gentile et al, 1996: 18)

The role of the community interpreter therefore is considerably different from that of the conference interpreter. I look more closely at the former in the next section.

1.4.2 The complex role of the community interpreter

The role of the community interpreter is not straight forward, merely interpreting between the source and target language²⁴. As emerges in the different factors listed in

²³ Reading and subsequently translating written material from one language to another

²⁴ The source language refers to the initial language (often the interpreter's native language) and the target language refers to the different language it is translated into.

section 1.4.1, community interpreters often have to work across deep cultural divides as well as differences between educational and socio-economic levels, where power differentials between the interlocutors (and the interpreter him/herself) can be quite salient (Angelelli, 2006). Interpreters may not even belong to one of the *speech communities* they are working with (groups of people who share understandings and expectations about how language should be used, Gumperz, 1964), and be potentially unaware of social and cultural customs and traditions that their interlocutors expect to be respected. Moreover, interpreters have to bring a knowledge of the community's functioning to their interpreting, a community to which they may also not necessarily belong (i.e. a police interrogation or a discussion between a teacher and a mother about an underachieving pupil).

When considering the role of the community interpreter, two contrasting *Discourses* (see section 2.10) emerge, regarding the identity of the professional interpreter. One Discourse considers how an individual's 'self' is intricately linked to the ICE (Angelelli, 2012). In this Discourse, in institutional encounters, interpreters (as all interlocutors)

bring their own set of beliefs, attitudes and deeply held views on interpersonal factors, such as gender, race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status, (where) all of these beliefs, attitudes and personal views are enacted...

(Ibid: 245)

and in a development of the Discourse, 'through the self the interpreter exercises agency and power, which materialize through different behaviours that alter the outcomes of the ICE' (Ibid). This Discourse has emerged is much research which has investigated the figure of the community interpreter (i.e. Metzger, 1999; Wadensjö, 1998; and particularly in the field of health care, Angelelli, 2004; Bolden, 2000; Cambridge, 1999; Davidson, 2001, as well as in courtrooms, Mikkelsen, 2008). This research has positioned the interpreter as an 'engaged interpreter, a visible player, and a participant interlocutor' (Angelelli, 2012: 253) in contrast to another Discourse which positions the interpreter as a 'ghost' (Gambal, 1998), more invisible than

visible, and/or a ‘conduit’ (Reddy, 1979), for channelling language between interlocutors (heightening the role of his/her cognitive and linguistic skills).

All of these considerations complicate a didactic approach to teaching community interpreting in interpreting institutions which it has been suggested (see section 1.1.2) might focus more on cognitive and linguistic skills and not take social and interpersonal relations, cross-cultural communication and the role the interpreter plays in the ICE into account, a criticism levelled by some academics and experts in the field. Angelelli (2012) for example sees the teaching and testing of interpreters as being too focused on information processing tasks (memory, analytical skills), language proficiency, specific terminology and knowledge of ethics, whereas questions of the interpreters ‘visibility’ and ‘agency’ are rarely assessed.

These two Discourses, and the different ways they construct the identity of the professional interpreter, emerged in the research data, and were influential in how my participants evaluated the resources to become interpreters (see chapters 5 and 6 of my data analysis).

I now turn to look more generally at the changes in theoretical and methodological approaches to interpreting and translation in the academy over the last 30 years. My intention is to give a picture in very broad strokes of the important developments in the field in general.

1.5 Theoretical and methodological developments in the field of interpreting and translation

The interpreting and translation disciplines have seen a series of *turns* in their history, particularly in the 1990s (Hornby, 2006). The first was a ‘methodological turn’ (Ibid), with a call from within the academy for increased empirical studies in the form of case studies, and the second was from without, with the ‘breathtaking developments in technology and in the globalization process, which together radically changed the job profiles of translators... and, in part, of interpreters too..’ (Ibid: 115). In interpreting in

particular, advanced technology has led to the formation of new fields in simultaneous interpreting (media interpreting and videoconferencing) and through globalization, and increased migration, there have been major increases in what has come to be known as *dialogue interpreting* (another term for community interpreting, see section 1.4) with the increased importance of professionals in cross community interpreting in places such as hospitals and courts of law (Ibid).

Theoretical approaches to interpreting and translation have also seen major shifts and turns, in particular ‘a social turn’ (see section 1.1.2). However, I will not go into an in-depth analysis here, as it is not a central concern of my research, but I will make reference to one or two key theories and theorists.

Principally in translation studies (but also in interpreting as well), Eugene Nida’s highly influential work in the 1960s (Nida, 1964) attempted to bring the field(s) into the ‘scientific era’, borrowing theoretical concepts and terminology from semantics and pragmatics. In his work Nida attempted to

...move away from the old idea that an orthographic word has a fixed meaning and towards a functional definition of meaning in which a word acquires meaning through its context and can produce various responses according to culture.

(Munday, 2001: 39)

In what he termed as ‘dynamic equivalence’, Nida brought *the audience* into the translator/interpreter frame, arguing that a translated text should not be concerned with a word-for-word equivalence but rather with re-creating the same effect on its target audience, as it would have on its source audience²⁵. The ensuing debate ‘as to how a text could possibly have the same effect and elicit the same response in two different cultures and times’ (Ibid: 43), continued well into the 1990s and beyond.

Most recently, we have also seen a ‘narrative turn’ (Baker, 2006), which has brought interpreters and translators front stage, raising, among other issues, moral debates

²⁵ The source audience refers to people whose language is the same as the original text, and the target audience refers to people whose language is the same as the language of the translation.

about their responsibility for the promulgation of ideologies and discourses, in particular ‘master narratives’ (see section 2.10), such as ‘the war on terror’, and their role in influencing international opinion and government policy in the context of international conflict (Ibid).

1.6 An ethnographic perspective on the researcher

Research that takes an ethnographic perspective cannot leave out the role the researcher plays in the research (see chapter two, section 2.15). In the final part of this chapter therefore, I present myself as the researcher. I provide some brief autobiographical information about how I became interested in this research (section 1.6.1), as well as some of my personal views on language and learning which may have influenced my approach to interpreting the data (section 1.6.2).

1.6.1 The researcher: biographical background

I have been teaching English on the three-year degree course at SSLMIT since 2007 and was an English language tutor from 2010 to 2013, responsible for helping students with their language learning difficulties. In my role as a language tutor I had the opportunity of talking to students about their experiences in the institution and became increasingly interested in how they perceived themselves as progressing in their studies to become interpreters, their worries and preoccupations and the goals they were setting themselves. This led me to want to investigate the community of interpreter-students in the department, in order to gain insights into how it was being shaped by their institutional experiences.

As an English language teacher in the institution, I have always been aware of learner difficulties and the potential reasons for those difficulties, informed by knowledge in the field of language acquisition and holding a particular set of views on it. My views then were always liable to influence my approach to my participants in the research. It was not my intention however to foreground this in my research, to intentionally look for examples to buttress theories, but instead to attempt to stand back and, perhaps, *be*

surprised. An underlining epistemological position from an ethnographic perspective is to attempt to work from experience in the field towards theory and knowledge and not vice-versa (however difficult –potentially impossible- that may be in actual practice). Having said that, I need to state my position about some of the issues regarding language teaching and learning that specifically loomed large in my mind. Although I present them here, they are intended simply to give a picture of my own personal thoughts and views as I engaged in my research.

1.6.2 The researcher: Personal views on language teaching and learning

I have been strongly influenced by the development over the past twenty years of language learning in relation to its socio-cultural context, extending beyond the notion of the student as a recipient of pedagogy, and throwing a critical light on past teaching practices, and their underlying assumptions about the language learner (Norton: 1995, 2000, 2006; Pavlenko & Blackledge: 2004; Pavlenko: 2006; Kramsch: 2009). I share these criticisms, which are levelled at teaching methods that take a decontextualized and reified view of the learner, depicting him/her as a passive container of information. From this perspective language is seen as being an objective body of knowledge, which is ‘transmitted’ from teacher to student (Kramsch: 2009). What has been seen as lacking in this account, and I concord with, is viewing the learner as a *social learner*, evolving out of a particular socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-educational environment, and learning in a situated context. From this perspective the learner is seen as constructing a personal world, an *identity*, by constantly reproducing, negotiating, and contesting meaning in relation to the ideological structures and discourses of the social and institutional world they interpret around them, together with the interpersonal relations that also shape and form them. In this respect I share an interest in the learner’s wishes, desires, emotions, imagined futures and willingness or ability *to invest* in language, which has become a research paradigm (Norton: 1995, 2000, 2006; Pavlenko: 2006; Kramsch: 2009). Although this position is part of my approach as an English language teacher, in my own ethnographic approach to the research I attempted to background it, and not to enter that research with a pre-conceived idea of what I expected to see (a form of list-ticking). It serves here as a

sensitizing vehicle to what relevancies I might have deduced from my narrative data, as I looked at the interpreters community as a whole, where success or failure at language learning (or its appraisal by the institution and its members) seemed to play a significant role in shaping an individual's image of themselves as a future professional in the field (see chapter five, section 5.2.5).

In the next chapter I give a literature review and describe my theoretical approach in the research.

Chapter Two

Literature review and theoretical approach

2.1 Introduction: Narrative and Ethnography

My research adopts a narrative analytical approach, to investigate a group of students in the department for interpreters and translators at the University of Bologna in Italy (Sslmit), as they navigate their first year in the institution. I approach this narrative research from an ethnographic perspective (section 2.18), seeing this as a potential means for acquiring an *emic*, insider view (see section 2.15), into how my participants interact with an institution which to date has seen little empirical research (see chapter one, section 1.2).

In this chapter, I begin with my epistemological stance towards narrative (section 2.2), how my research is positioned in relation to narrative study traditions (section 2.3) and how narrative is defined in this context (section 2.4). In section 2.5, I describe how narrative research has been applied in the social sciences to date, and go on to talk about the emergence of the *new narrative turn* and the development of *small story* research, which is the research approach I adopted (sections 2.6 – 2.8). In sections 2.9 – 2.10, I define the central taxonomies and underpinning concepts in the thesis (in particular with regard to *narrative and story*, *identity and self* and *Discourse*). In sections 2.11 to 2.11.1, I expound on how a Bakhtinian theoretical approach to language, with its emphasis on *dialogism*, can frame narrated life experiences not simply as a recounting of past (and/or future hypothetical) events but also as a present sense making activity, open to change and variability. In section 2.12, I introduce Bourdieusian theory, in particular the triad of ‘Habitus’, ‘Field’ and ‘Capital’, to explore reasons for potential continuities in narratives over time. I then present my analytical frame, *narrative positioning analysis* (section 2.13) and describe the role that *indexicality* can play in that analysis (section 2.13.1). In the final part of the

chapter, I outline the potential advantages of an ethnographic approach to narrative research (section 2.14 - 2.16), exploring criticisms of ethnography and arguments in its defence (sections 2.17 – 2.17.2), and clarify my own ‘ethnographic perspective’ in the research (section 2.18). In section 2.19, I give a concluding summary.

2.2 Narrative as an epistemology

My approach to narrative in the research is aligned with researchers who take narrative to be an epistemology, a way of knowing about the world, and ‘a mode of thought, communication, and apprehension of reality’ (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012: 15). This approach sees narratives as a way by which people make sense of their lives, and how narratives are an essential means for (re)constructing and interpreting experiences (Bruner, 1986, 1991, 1995; Sarbin, 1986; Sommers and Gibson, 1994). From this perspective,

(n)arrative becomes much more than a set of techniques and tools for collecting and analysing data. It becomes a particular way of constructing knowledge requiring a particular commitment and even a bias from the researcher in addition to a political stance.

(De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012: 19)

An epistemological approach to narrative is not however shared by all those researchers who use narrative analysis in their research. Some researchers may carry out narrative-eliciting interviews as part of larger studies for example, without displaying a specific orientation to narrative *per se*.

Asking research participants to tell their stories of experience can be attractive to qualitative researchers, but treating these stories as non-narrative textual data (i.e. regular qualitative data) or as supplementary material for experimental findings does not make their research projects narrative. Narrative methods ... therefore, may be employed more or less in a particular study, which itself will more or less embody a narrative epistemology...

(Rugen, 2012: 8)

In this research then I make a ‘particular commitment’ to narrative as an epistemology. In relation to this, I maintain that all narratives are part of a culturally generated view of the world, formed by the tropes and potential story-lines that a culture has developed to interpret experience, limiting (but not dictating) the narratives that an individual can and cannot tell to represent that experience. From this perspective, narratives can be seen as providing some purchase on how an individual or group constructs their view of the world and their place in it, and how researchers can learn about individuals’ meaning making processes.

Moreover, in my research I approach this meaning-making process from the perspective of two sides of the same coin. On one side, narratives are seen as representing something of an individual’s sense of place in the world over time, in the potential consistencies in the form and content of the stories they tell about that world and how they position themselves and others in it. On the other side, narratives are told in discursive interaction and therefore are subject to potential shifts and changes in the contingent, synchronic moment of their telling. From both these perspectives something of an individual’s *social identity* (see sections 2.9.2 and 2.13) evolves in the tension between continuity and change, between what has been socially and culturally inculcated and sedimented over time, and what occurs in the everyday unpredictable experience of human interaction (Holland *et al*, 1998).

In order to accommodate this position, with regard to the potential of narratives both to sustain continuities and yet still be open to change, I drew on Bourdieusian and Bakhtinian theories, which I explicate and contextualise in relation to narrative in sections 2.11 – 2.12).

In the following section, I introduce two principle research traditions in narrative studies (narrative *inquiry* and narrative *analysis*) and position my own research within these traditions.

2.3 Narrative *inquiry* and narrative *analysis*: breaking down barriers in research traditions

Narrative research has tended to look at narratives from two perspectives: the content of the narrative and the form the narrative takes. The content of a narrative refers to what it is about, what is narrated, why, when and by whom? Research that is concerned principally with answering these questions, with addressing the content of people's experiences and their reflections on those experiences through narrative, is often referred to as *narrative inquiry* (Bell, 2002; Georgakopoulou, 2006; Rugen, 2012). This approach particularly favours what is often referred to as *big story* accounts (see section 2.7), narratives that 'entail a significant measure of reflection on either an event or an experience, a significant portion of a life, or the whole of it' (Freeman, 2006: 131). Narrative inquirers are concerned with what a narrative can tell them about a person's experiences, how they represent past experiences, and how they interpret those experiences in their telling.

A focus on the actual language deployed in the telling of a narrative, how that language emerges in its turn by turn account, and how the participants involved (teller(s), addressees) interact and co-construct narratives, is an approach often referred to as *narrative analysis* (Georgakopoulou: 2006). Although this approach does not negate the importance of content, it is focused principally on the form in which a narrative evolves in situated talk.

Narrative inquiry is mainly concerned with what a narrative might reveal about the teller's projected *identity* (see section 2.9.2, for an exploration of the concepts of *identity* and *self* in the field of narrative studies), being interpreted by what they choose to put in and leave out of their stories. Whereas, narrative analysis is more concerned with the situated, constructive narrative act itself, and the way that form and discourse are interrelated in the moment-by-moment creation of self.

Recent research has seen increasing attempts to break down the barriers between these two analytic approaches to narrative, to bring content and form closer together in narrative studies. This has been viewed by some researchers (Georgakopoulou, 2006), as being due to the increasing importance of questions of *identity* in the social sciences, which has led researchers to become increasingly concerned with the who and what, as well as the how, of narrative in human interactive communication (Ibid).

Pavlenko (2007) and Reissman (2007) both propose combining content and a structural analysis of form, as a means of enhancing the quality of narrative research, a way of giving deeper insights than a content only approach would provide. Research along these lines can be seen particularly in the work of Bamberg and Georgakopoulou, and their development and employment of *narrative positioning analysis* (Bamberg, 1997; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008). This analytic approach to narrative data attempts to break down the barriers between narrative analysis and narrative inquiry, between seeing narratives as situated talk-in-interaction, with a narrow focus on the here and now of those interactions, to a consideration of the wider socio-cultural world from which these narratives emerge, and the *Discourses* that play a part in shaping them (see section 2.10 for a definition of Discourse).

In my own study I chose to adopt narrative positioning analysis as my analytical frame, to join with this research (see section 2.13 for detailed description of the theory). Narrative positioning analysis has been increasingly employed by narrative researchers to explore the connections between a person's more localised sense of self, as it emerges in situated talk-in-interaction, and their wider social identities which emerge over time in relation to wider social discourses (De Fina, 2013; Georgakopoulou, 2013).

2.4 Defining what *narrative* is

Definitions of what a narrative is are as varied as the disciplines that have adopted it as a research method (see section 2.5). What counts as narrative in literary studies for example is quite different from what counts as narrative in the fields of psychology, sociology and education, among others. The variances in these disciplines' histories, and philosophic underpinnings, makes defining exactly what a narrative is then a complex and difficult task as it 'resists straight forward and agreed upon definitions and conceptualisations' (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012:1). In the following, I give my definition of narrative for the purposes of this research, (in section 2.9.1, I also

explore the taxonomies of *narrative* and *story*, and their conceptual underpinnings, explaining why I chose to use the former as opposed to the latter).

In my research I was interested specifically in oral narratives, in particular those narratives that emerge in situated conversation. Narratives in this context can come in different forms, a narrative can be taken to be a *life narrative*, a narrative which encompasses a whole life or part of a life (albeit always a selected representation of that life), sometimes referred to as a *big story* (Bamberg, 2006; Freeman, 2003, 2006). Equally, a narrative can be a relatively short episode in a stretch of dialogue, emerging briefly in the flow of conversation between interlocutors, often referred to as a *small story* (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Georgakopoulou, 2006, 2007). In sections 2.7 – 2.8, I look more carefully at the concepts of big and small stories, and how my research is positioned in relation to them.

As defining exactly what a narrative is is not clear-cut then, I left my definition intentionally broad, adopting Toolan's (2001) minimal requisite that it is

a recounting of things spatiotemporally distant: here's a present teller, seemingly close to the addressee (reader or listener), and there at a distance is the tale or the topic

(Ibid: 1)

In this definition (elaborated from Rugen, 2012), the narrator is seen as recounting events or experiences that are distant spatially (in another place), and/or temporally (in another time, which might be past, future or hypothetical future for example). The interrelationship between the narrator, the addressee(s) and the narrative are variable. The narrator might be closely engaged with the addressee(s) (i.e. recounting shared experiences), instancing a narrative which develops in a fragmentary manner, being potentially challenged, interrupted and/or commented on by others. Or the narrator might be less engaged with the addressee(s), holding the floor for a long turn, or a series of sustained turns, constructing a long, sustained narrative (i.e. recounting personal, unshared experiences), thus distancing him/herself more from the addressee(s).

As my approach to narrative studies is linked to recent developments in its use in the social sciences, I briefly give some historical background (section 2.5), and then go on to introduce some of the relevancies of the *new narrative turn* (sections 2.6 – 2.8) that have influenced my research.

2.5 Narrative in the social sciences: Past and present

Narratives have been used as an analytical tool and a method for investigating human experience since the 19th century (Spector-Mersel, 2010). The preferred genre of psychoanalysis was the case study, which used individuals' stories to gain insights into the workings of their minds. In the 1920s and 1930s sociologists from the Chicago School used biographies to understand the daily life of particular urban communities (Ibid) and anthropologists such as Malinowski (1922) used narratives (principally stories of his own experiences) to portray different cultures (e.g. the Trobriand islanders).

After the Second World War the dominance of the positivist paradigm made biographical methods seem unscientific and even amateurish (Denzin, 1989). Positivism applies scientific methodology to examine social and psychological phenomenon, refusing to go beyond empirical evidence and the causal or statistical relationship between variables. It was not until the 1970s, with increasing criticism of this positivist approach, with its reliance on quantitative methods as being the only way to represent the world, that the 'interpretive turn' (Rabinow & Sullivan, 1987) came about, and opened the doors to narrative research again, in what became known as its *first turn* in the social sciences.

Exactly when and how this turn emerged is hard to pinpoint,

(h)owever, although the exact historical origins are not clearly definable, it nevertheless is commonly agreed upon that over the course of the last 40 years or so a seemingly unbounded wave of narrative theorizing has emerged.

(Bamberg, 2007: 1)

The initial pioneers in narrative research in the social sciences were strongly represented in psychology, in particular by Jerome Bruner and Theodore Sarbin in the 1980s (Josselson & Lieblich, 2009: 195). Bruner (1986), drawing in part from Vygotsky (1978), saw that “human mental activity depends for its full expression upon being linked to a ‘cultural tool kit’ (Bruner, 1986: 11). He saw participation in the ‘cultural world’ (Ibid), as being essential in constructing a human psychology, and narrative as a cultural tool which formed one of the two principle cognitive modes for interpreting the world (the other being the more scientific *paradigmatic* mode).

Sarbin, the founder of *narrative psychology* (Josselson & Lieblich, 2009), saw narrative as the 'root metaphor' (Sarbin, 1986; drawing on Pepper, 1942) for examining and interpreting human action, proposing narrative as the way human beings 'think, perceive, imagine, and make moral choices according to narrative structures' (Sarbin, 1986: 19).

Wertsch (1985, 1998), another psychologist, placed the 'cultural tool' (or ‘mediational means’ as he often referred to it) at the centre of his research into individual and wider societal change, maintaining that 'a new cultural tool frees us from earlier limitations of perspective ... (but also) introduces new ones of its own' (Ibid: 39). In his analysis of 'collective remembering' (Wertsch, 2002) he analysed how shared narrative texts 'are produced by the state, the media, and so forth, and how they are consumed, or used, by individuals and groups' (Ibid: 6).

Although narrative analysis had strong origins in psychology, literary criticism also played a significant role, particularly in the work of Bakhtin (which I look at in more detail in sections 2.11 - 2.11.2). Since these early pioneers however, narrative analysis has emerged in many diverse disciplines, such as history, law, communication studies, linguistics, medicine, psychology, cultural studies, sociology, and anthropology, to mention only a few. Many research traditions too, have employed narrative analysis, such as ethnography and ethnomethodology, literary interpretation, hermeneutics, and sociolinguistics (Sarbin, 1986). In all of its uses and applications, across so many disciplines and through so many methodological and theoretical lenses, narrative has

sometimes been seen as coming 'to mean anything and everything' (Riessman and Speedy, 2007: 428), (see section 2.6, for my approach to narrative). Consequently, 'The state of the art' in narrative today (Bamberg, 2006, 2007, 2010) has begun to redefine its 'core' (Ibid) more and more, the ontological and epistemological concepts, which are considered central to narrative research, as well as the theoretical and methodological approaches. The (re-)examination of all of these has led to the emergence of a 'new narrative turn' (Bamberg, 2007; Georgakopoulou, 2006), which I outline in the next section.

2.6 The *New narrative turn* – an introduction.

In the last decade some central areas of research appear to be emerging as part of a 'new narrative turn' (Bamberg, 2007; Georgakopoulou, 2006). Smith (2007) attempts to summarise some of the 'recurring broad views' (Ibid) with regard to the ontological and epistemological concepts at the heart of this research, whilst acknowledging that they are far from being exhaustive:

(1) To begin with, narratives can be effective in social and individual transformation... (2) narratives are important in the process of constructing selves and identities... people understand themselves as selves through the stories they tell and the stories they feel part of... (3) whilst narratives are personal they are also social. They are thoroughly shaped, but not determined by socio-cultural conventions about the language. The context, setting, audience, the particular situated purpose of a story, tellability, and the narrative resources available to tellers frame what might be said and how it can be narrated. (4) Narratives are done in social interactions... narrative is also a form of social interaction... (5) People do things with narratives and they have important social functions, such as having moral force and accomplishing social status. Thus, stories do things in relation to others. Yet people cannot truly predict what another person does with them. Stories compete for attention and are always out of control since they allow multiple perspectives.

My own research collocates primarily with point two, in that I take the position that the narratives elicited from my participants can provide insights into the continuities and changes in their interpreter-student *identities* (see sections 2.9.2 and 2.13), how *Discourses* in the institution shape those identities (see section 2.10), and how my participants construct the identity of the professional interpreter. In this context, narrative research is potentially helpful in highlighting how some individuals appear to perceive the figure of the professional interpreter as being incompatible with their own perception of themselves, and in some cases abandoning the pursuit of becoming one in the course of their first year in the institution.

The point that narratives are done in social interactions and that they are a form of social interaction (point 4), is integral to a major shift in narrative research in the *new narrative turn*, a shift that questions what actually constitutes a narrative. This has led to the emergence of *small story* research (Bamberg, 2007; Georgakopoulou, 2006), which I have adopted as my own analytical focus and which I go on to describe in more detail in the following sections of this chapter (2.7 - 2.8). Firstly, I turn to look at some of the principal differences between *small story* research, and the earlier and more established tradition of *big story* research, (see section 2.7, below), I then go on to describe how my own data were considered as being more suitable to a small story approach (section 2.8).

2.7 *Big story* and *small story* research: Narratives as finished texts or discursive products

Recent research has begun to look at narratives from a different perspective from that of the past. In the past the emphasis was on what have come to be called *big stories* (Freeman, 2006; Bamberg, 2006), sometimes referred to as *life stories*; being reflexive, structured stories which concentrate on past events, often unshared by the listener (e.g. an interviewer), in that they portray life experiences that are extraneous to the listener's own experiences, and are often elicited with the purpose of exploring

those experiences. Furthermore, big stories are often considered to be well-formed stories, with beginnings, middles and ends, and have been approached analytically as finished texts (Labov, 1972, 1981; Labov and Waletzky, 1967), (see chapter 3, section 3.8, for a more detailed contextualisation of the Labovian model in relation to the research).

In the last decade however, we have seen the emergence of *small stories* (Bamberg, 2007; Georgakopoulou, 2006), a development that is central to the new narrative turn. Small stories are seen as those stories which emerge in the contingent moment of talk-in-interaction (often co-constructed with others, who have shared knowledge and experience), and defined as the fragmentary, fleeting and contingent ‘tellings of on-going events, future or hypothetical events, shared (known) events, but also allusions to tellings, deferrals of tellings, and refusals to tell’ (Georgakopoulou, 2006: 123). Being often far more fragmentary, these small stories are still however in the process of being defined for analytical purposes, as they rarely correspond to the canons of prototypical narrative (i.e. big stories). For this reason my own definition of a narrative was left intentionally broad (see section 2.4). Small stories then are not treated as finished texts (with beginnings, middles and ends), but rather as ‘emergent discursive products that are subject to adjustments and negotiations, as they are always embedded in social practices’ (De Fina, 2013: 155).

My own approach to the analysis of narratives in my data drew on Bamberg and Georgakopoulou’s work on *small stories* (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008) (see section 2.7). This entailed a closer consideration of the narrative in relation to the interlocutors present at its telling, and the interrelationship between what is told and the context of its telling (with whom, where and how), (see sections 2.3 and 2.4).

This approach to an analysis of narrative shows how narrators deploy a number of strategies (i.e. setting a scene, describing characters, and the use of reported speech), which position them in relation both to the episode they are relating (henceforth, the *narrative event*) as well as to the situated context in which they are telling the narrative (henceforth, the *narrative-telling event*). From this perspective narratives can also be seen as situated, co-constructed *performances* (Bauman, 1986), where narrators are

aware (to a greater or lesser extent) of how their narratives have an influence on their audience, and vice-versa. In sum, narratives framed as performances in interactive talk are not seen as finished texts therefore, although they may refer to past events they also inform us of how social identities are being managed in the co-constructed present of their telling, as well as about their potential future orientations.

Rather than focusing specifically on the *types* of narrative told, with regard to their specific spacio-temporal positioning, being potentially about past events, future and/or hypothetical events, my focus was on how narratives are used as resources for identity work in the situated moment of their telling. *Small stories* in this context are less about narratives that are unified, coherent and rehearsed then. They are emergent in situated talk, and are not so much about reflections about distant events but rather reflections in the here and now of their telling, drawing on what has passed, what is happening, and what will or might happen in the future. Indeed

... the past informs and shapes the future in ways that foreground the intertextual links of stories making them part of an interactional trajectory, showing up their natural histories as events that can be transposed from one context to another across time and space (Silverstein & Urban, 1996).

(Georgakopoulou, 2007: 150)

This is a view of identities as being jointly co-constructed in interaction; negotiated, contested, ratified, revised and refashioned as opposed to being portable objects that are easily isolatable.

In the new narrative turn, *big stories* have been increasingly questioned as being abstracted from day-to-day existence, examples of 'life on holiday' (Freeman, 2006; Bamberg, 2006), in the sense that they are not part of everyday language activity, rare in frequency, and almost a luxury of self-reflection (Ibid). *Small stories* however are seen as being part of people's everyday language work, as they engage in sense making activities (Bamberg, 2006). Big story research has by no means been abandoned however, as by their reflexive nature, big stories can be considered to have

‘revelatory power’ in their ‘...capacity to yield insight and understanding, of the sort that cannot occur in the immediacy of the present moment and the small stories that issue from it’ (Freeman, 2006: 134).

I now go on to explain why I decided to approach my research from a small story and not a big story perspective in relation to the data I collected.

2.8 The choice between big and small story approaches in the research

My research was based principally on interviews carried out with my participants over the period of their first academic year in the institution, both individually and in groups (see chapter three for a detailed account of the research methodology). My initial intention was to elicit both big and small stories, *big* in the one-to-one interviews with my participants about their life experiences, and (at least potentially I thought) *small*, in their group interviews, which I carried out to share and compare their experiences in the institution. What emerged in the research however was a much less clearer line between the two (see my field notes, appendix B: 722). In my one-to-one interviews my participants told their ‘life stories’, but these stories were shorter than I imagined they would be, being described in broad strokes to arrive quickly at their experiences in the institution, focusing more on what was going on in their lives at that moment in Sslmit. When analysing the data the majority of their talk in these one-to-one interviews then consisted of short narratives, *snap-shots* and vignettes, about their personal experiences in Sslmit.

If the narratives that emerged in my one-to-one interviews could not be classed as *big* stories, the narratives that emerged in the group narratives were equally difficult to classify as being *small*. Although they often conformed to small story data (often being fragmentary tellings of shared events), contextually they were potentially at odds with early research in the field of small story research. Georgakopoulou’s initial work on small story analysis (Georgakopoulou, 2000) used recordings of adolescent Greek girls in bars and cafes as its data, which contextualised small stories as examples of ‘overhearing’ natural talk-in-interaction (Ibid), and not what emerges in

researcher led interviews. However, Bamberg (1997) and Bamberg and Georgakopoulou (2008) have drawn on interview data as the source of some of their work on small story research, and particularly on the development of Narrative Positioning analysis. Moreover, Georgakopoulou's, and De Fina's recent work (2013), draw on interview data as part of their small story research. I therefore considered the data in my research as falling within the small story type but also potentially expanding its stricter sense. Although it emerges out of contingent, interactive discourse (talk-in-interaction), it is the product of a researcher (me), attempting to contextualise the setting for his participants, i.e. *talk about the institution (in the institution)*. This type of story is by no means new however, as self-help groups for example, are often subject to a form of shared story telling based around a particular issue or set of issues in individuals' lives (i.e. Alcoholics Anonymous).

2.9 (Re)defining terms in the new narrative turn - Introduction

Aside from the big-small story approach to narrative research, the *new narrative turn* has also been increasingly concerned with (re)defining some of the central taxonomies of narrative research (and the conceptual meanings that underpin them), which at times have been questioned by academics as being lacking in consistency or clarity of meaning. For example, what do we mean by *narratives* and *stories* (Linde, 1993; Wierzbicka, 2010), which often appear to be used interchangeably in the literature. Also, what is the difference between *identity* and *self* (or *sense of self*), which has emerged as a central concern in small story research (Bamberg, 2011), and which is central to my own research as previously highlighted (see section 2.3). In the following sections I explore these taxonomies and their conceptual underpinning, and how I contextualise them in my own research.

2.9.1 Narratives, histories and stories

Wierzbicka (2010) makes the claim that the word *story* is an 'anglo' concept (Ibid), which is not translatable into other languages, although I suggest that such a vast claim

be narrowed to *most European languages*, as a knowledge of all the world's languages is perhaps too great a claim to make.

Roughly speaking, story can be seen as an alternative to (1) history, (2) tale, (3) life (someone's life) and (4) experience (someone's experience)

(Ibid: 15)

Indeed, in many European languages (particularly of Latin origin) *story*, Wierzbicka argues, is often synonymous with *history*. 'Anglo story' however,

suggests a well-defined shape and a kind of internal logic of (well-chosen) events.. (it) suggests something.. many people want to hear or to read (as it were, 'a good story'), whereas "a history" does not.

(Ibid: 158)

Story, I also note, may have connotations of something that is untrue, or a *version of the truth*, where people can believe one person's story of events above another's (something that Wierzbicka does not mention). However, an aspect that is of importance for narrative research from an 'anglo' perspective (i.e. a thesis in English), is Wierzbicka's concept of *story* suggests something that forms a coherent whole, with a beginning a middle and an end (a finished text, see section 2.7). In this sense, the whole concept of 'small *story*' research is notably something of a misnomer, as what is actually researched are not stories as defined here (coherent whole narratives with beginnings, middles and ends) but rather fragmentary and at times unfinished narratives (Ibid), which are approached as being discursive products rather than finished texts (Ibid). In fact, small story research does not refer to *stories* in its actual analysis of data, preferring to use terms such as 'narrative episode' (Georgakopoulou, 2013).

Further developing the concept of *story* as a finished text, Wierzbicka (drawing from Ong, 1982), sees 'modern anglo culture', in contrast to most other European cultures, as 'chirographic' (writing-based as opposed to oral). This interiorization of writing has deep consequences in her opinion for ways of thinking, and Wierzbicka views the ubiquitous word *story* as emblematic of this in that it carries with it a 'reference to

reading (and therefore, implicitly, writing)', (Wierzbicka, 2010: 176). In this sense *story*, Wierzbicka claims, has semantic affiliations with a written text, and by extension a finished text with a beginning a middle and an end. Indeed, Bamberg (sharing a similar view of the concept of *story*) proposes 'narration' for the object of small story research

...in contrast to narrative or story, in order to emphasize the activity of narrating, and to de-emphasize the final product of a text. The activity of narrating.. (is).. firmly grounded in “talk” (discourse), but as “embodied talk” that is analysable as multi modal engagement.

(Bamberg, 2011: 17)

From this perspective, the choice from among these taxonomies (*story*, *narrative* or *narration*) can be intricately linked to the epistemological and ontological perspectives in research orientation and methodology. In my own research I chose to use *narrative*, in part because it is in more common usage and has clearer associations with ‘*narrative* research’ in general, but I used it in Bamberg’s sense of an open-ended activity, and not as a finished text (see section 2.7, where I clarify my approach to narratives as unfinished texts).

2.9.2 Identity and self in narrative research

Another important area of taxonomic (and conceptual) debate is between the concepts of *identity* and *self* (or *sense of self*), again so prevalent in narrative literature (Georgakopoulou, 2006).

Bamberg (2011) approaches the debate not from an attempt to define the features and functions of the two concepts but in relation to three challenges, ‘dilemmatic spaces’ (Ibid), that human beings need to navigate.

They consist of: (i) a successful diachronic navigation between constancy and change, (ii) the establishment of a synchronic connection between sameness and difference (between self and other), and (iii) the management

of agency between the double-arrow of a person-to-world versus a world-to-person direction of fit.

(Ibid: 3)

In Bamberg's opinion all three of these 'dilemmatic spaces' are intricately related to both identity and self but the concepts differ in relation to how they are prioritized:

It is argued that identity takes off from the continuity/change dilemma, and from here ventures into issues of uniqueness (self/other differentiation) and agency. In contrast, notions of self and sense of self start from the self/other and agency differentiation and from here can filter into diachronicity of continuity and change.'

(Ibid: 6)

With regards to research, the emphasis on diachronicity in questions of identity (foregrounding change and continuity over time, as Bamberg highlights here) have made researchers' claims about a person's identity based on close up textual/interactional analysis of their situated speech, 'suspect' (Rampton, 2007). Questions of identity therefore have been seen as having more to do with a second order analysis (Ibid), where the researcher gathers together multiple, inter-related data over time in an attempt to draw assumptions about an individual's social identity, their identity in relation to how they align themselves towards the wider social world around them (Georgakopoulou, 2013), (see sections 2.13 and 2.13.1, for an explanation of how the concept of social identity is defined in relation to narrative positioning analysis).

Self, or sense of self, on the other hand (foregrounding sameness and difference in the moment of speech), is a term for describing what emerges in situated, interactive talk. Self/sense of self, centres on how a person appears to be expressing themselves in relation to others in an instance of situated talk. Here the researcher is still interested in how individuals orientate towards the social world around them, but without attempting to draw any wider conclusions beyond the situated moment (see section 2.13.1 on *indexicality*).

In my research therefore I use the terms identity and self (or sense of self) relative to the distinctions described here.

2.10 Defining Discourse

Small story research in the new narrative turn, is increasingly concerned with connecting small, localised narratives to wider discourses in society, seeing this as an essential part of trying to investigate an individual's social identity (De Fina, Schiffrin & Bamberg, 2006; Bamberg, De Fina & Schiffrin, 2007, 2011; Georgakopoulou, 2013; De Fina, 2013).

The term *discourse* with a small d is often taken to mean 'connected stretches of language that make sense, like conversation...' (Gee, 1996: 127), whereas *Discourse* with a capital D is often characterised as a wider framework, to do with '..ways of being in the world, or forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities..' (Ibid.). *Discourses* are also 'socially accepted associations among ways of using language, of thinking, valuing, acting and interacting' (Gee, 1999: 17). Related terms to Discourse (with a capital D) are numerous among various disciplines: *Cultural models* (Holland & Skinner, 1987), *Interpretive repertoires* (Potter & Wetherell, 1987), and *Master narratives* (Lyotard, 1984) to name a few, but in line with small story research I chose to use Gee's term Discourse, which is ubiquitous in the literature.

Discourses with a capital D have often been criticised for their tendency to be seen as sets of organised propositions in people's minds, imposed by powerful entities (De Fina, 2013) instead of, as Blommaert describes them, 'materially mediated ideational phenomena' (Blommaert, 2005: 164, quoted in De Fina, 2013), which requires something more to understand them, an 'attention to the material, political, and institutional environments in which they operate' (Ibid.), as well as to how they are reproduced and imposed.

In my research, I analysed my interview data, and my ethnographic observations (my field notes, see appendix B), both in and outside the interview process therefore, to explore those underlining Discourses that appeared to be reiterative in my participants' talk. These Discourses emerged from a variety of sources. For example, how my participants' discussed teacher talk, and how they described the institution and their lives within it (i.e. in relation to their peers, and their shared or unshared goals). Some Discourses appeared to be linked to the institution's representation of itself *on-line* (through its web pages on the university website), where institutionally stated objectives about student development were mirrored in the research data (see chapters five and six).

Although I was principally interested in Gee's capital D 'Discourses' in my research, I also became aware of smaller discourses that emerged in my data, and which appeared to be connected to more localised assertions by authoritative figures in the institution, such as teachers (see chapter five for an example of this in my data). These forms of discourse were not clearly tied to big D Discourses however, but appeared to be products of a more personal and idiosyncratic nature. They were not merely stretches of language that made sense (Gee's small 'd'), but appeared to be more significant, positioning my participants with regard to the identity of the professional interpreter and the resources required to become one. I therefore allowed for a form of discourse in my research that came mid-way between capital and small d discourses, a discourse which was defined as

... connected sets of statements, concepts, terms and expressions, which constitute a way of talking about or writing about a particular issue, thus framing the way people understand and act with respect to that issue.

(Watson, 1994: 113)

In section 2.12, I look at these forms of discourse in relation to Bourdieusian theory, in particular the concept of *capital* (Bourdieu, 1977).

I now turn to look at one of the central concepts that underpin my approach to narrative, and in particular small story narratives, that human linguistic interaction is

‘dialogical’ (Bakhtin & Holquist, 1981). I begin by describing what I mean by dialogical (section 2.11), before describing its relevancy to my narrative approach in this research (section 2.11.2).

2.11 A *dialogical* approach to human interaction

Narratives are told in human interaction (see section 2.6), being susceptible to modification and change by the very contingent nature of their telling, and the narrator is continually influenced by where and when that story is told, and with whom (see section 2.3). This led me to take a ‘dialogical’ approach to narrative in the research (Bakhtin & Holquist, 1981; Holquist, 1990), which sees all language (narrative included) as being in a continuous dialogue between the words we are given, inhabited by the meanings of others, and our attempts to give them our own meanings.

...there are no “neutral” words and forms – words and forms that belong to “no one”; language has been completely taken over, shot through with intentions and accents...all words have the “taste” of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and hour...language, for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else’s. It becomes “one’s own” only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention.

(Bakhtin & Holquist, 1981: 293-294)

The *word* then, as Bakhtin describes it, is half someone else’s, only becoming one’s own when one ‘populates it with his own intention, his own accent’ adapting it to his own ‘semantic and expressive intention’ (Ibid). For Bakhtin then there is a continuous dialogue between the words we are given, shot through with others’ meanings, and our attempts to give them our own meaning. How this relates specifically to narrative is the subject of the next section (2.11.1).

2.11.1 Bakhtinian theory and its relevancy to narrative

As humans engage in interactive dialogue they draw on narrative forms which are socio-culturally embedded, and which are sourced from a shared cultural repertoire of tropes and potential storylines (see section 2.2). When personal experiences are related as narratives they often do so as unusual variations from standard plot(s), culturally codified, ‘canonical’ forms that are in some way ‘breached’ (Bruner, 1991), without which they risk the audience’s potential question, ‘so what?’ (Ibid), questioning the whole purpose of the narrative in the first place. In this way narratives draw from culturally formed structures but also, from a Bakhtinian perspective, are capable of ‘dialoguing’ with alternative perspectives to make sense of new experiences. As Brockmeier says (2009),

(t)elling stories is an advanced mode of communicating and negotiating meanings, but it is also an advanced mode of creating novel meanings. The constructions of narrative not only use established cultural patterns and models but also tackle experiences, ideas, and feelings that break with them and go beyond the common ground.

(Ibid: 227)

From this perspective, the individual is *authoring* not only his/her ‘words’ but also the ‘stories’ that make sense of human experience. The space in which this occurs creates the potential for new interpretations of that experience, and hence new perspectives for the interlocutor, and in particular for the author him/herself. Narratives thus, may seek to highlight variations from standard plots and rebalance cultural understandings of how the world should be understood (Bruner, 1991) but also in their dialogical relation to the *other* (i.e. interlocutor) may provide alternative perspectives.

Narratives cannot be separated from the context in which they are told, they exist in a specific time and space, and are co-constructed between the teller and the listener(s) in the moment of their telling. They are not simple retellings of a past, pre-existing life but enactments of the self before others, helping to define and redefine who we are in the actual situated moment of their telling (Wortham, 2000, 2001). Narratives nearly always have some social purpose, they may be told to increase social cohesion, to

entertain or inform, but they also manage the impressions we make on our audience, influencing their conduct towards us. In this sense they can be viewed as ‘performances’ (Goffman, 1959), (see section 2.16), drawing in part on past performances to reinforce an image of ourselves, which attempts to convince our audiences (and us) of who we are over time. However, our narratives are also open to new and different interpretations and improvisations as they are acted out ‘front stage’ (Goffman, 1959), under the public eye. In the contingent moment in which the narrative emerges in talk then, the narrator is not only reproducing an image of him/herself but also exploring different selves (positioning them in relation to his/her interlocutor), perhaps affirming past ones, but also potentially casting themselves in new ones, drawing from their experiences, ideas and feelings to potentially create novel meanings.

Bakhtin’s dialogism also ‘pictures social and cultural activity as a manifold phenomenon, of a variety shaped by the juxtaposition of incommensurate voices’ (Holland et al, 1998: 238). As ‘our habitual identities bump up against each other’ (Ibid) in everyday social life, these multiple voices play in a space, in Bakhtin’s terms the space of the author, and it is in that space that there is the potential for shifts in our ways of interpreting ourselves. *Voice* in narrative is particularly salient when narrators are reporting the speech of their characters. The way that narrators voice their characters (the way that they report what they said in the narrative event) is a means of positioning those characters in the social world, and by extension positioning the narrators themselves in relation to that world. In my own research I paid particular attention to the manner in which narrators voiced their characters then, both lexically and prosodically, seeing it as a means of understanding how they were positioning themselves towards the world of the institution and their own place in it. This positioning however was not seen as being fixed but rather in flux, providing perspectives on how their projected selves were shifting in relation to the narratives that were being told (where, when and with whom).

This approach to narratives aligns with Bamberg’s own view of what an analysis of narrative should do, tackling

..the pressing overarching dilemmas that the storytellers themselves are faced with (involving) issues of continuity, i.e. having a stable sense of self over time, in the face of change; issues of uniqueness and conformity, that is, whether it is possible to consider oneself as unique in the face of being the same as every other person; and issues of agency, the extent to which a teller is at liberty to create positions for themselves as opposed to being constrained by how others position him or her (Bamberg, 2010: 112).

(Georgakopoulou, 2013: 92)

If Bakhtinian dialogism goes some way to explaining the potential for human beings to negotiate their social identities through language practices in the form of narration, (re-)positioning themselves and being (re-)positioned in the contingent moment of their narrative telling, then Bourdieusian theory (1977, 1985, 1986) provides a framework for understanding the forces that sustain continuities in social identities over time. Bourdieu's concepts of 'Habitus', 'Field', and 'Capital' (Ibid) attempt to explain how social power is reproduced across society and down through generations, maintaining continuities in social identities and resisting change. I now go on to explicate Bourdieusian theory and its relevancy for narrative in my research.

2.12 Bourdieusian theory and narrative

In Bourdieu's theory people are born into, and act in, a particular set of 'Fields', socio-culturally defined groups or communities, where each is described as

...a separate social universe having its own laws of functioning independent of those of politics and the economy.

(Bourdieu, 1993: 162)

These fields then (such as 'the literary field' or 'the academic field') have their own 'specific laws of functioning' (Ibid: 163) that create and shape our sense of place and being in the world, our 'Habitus' as Bourdieu calls it. According to Bourdieu, by coming into contact with, and living in and through these fields for the duration of our lives, we are continually moulding that habitus.

Every field is seen as having varying amounts of ‘Capital’, by this Bourdieu refers not only to ‘economic capital’ (financial resources) but also ‘symbolic capital’, such as ‘social capital’, (e.g. accumulated prestige and social status), and ‘cultural capital’ (cultural acquisitions such as knowledge and skills, particularly exemplified by qualifications). Depending on the types and amount of capital that an individual possesses and in which field they find themselves, they are at an advantage or disadvantage, and in the latter case open to what Bourdieu calls ‘symbolic violence’, a form of socially generated prejudice that places the individual in a less powerful position, one where he or she is subjugated by others with greater amounts of capital (Bourdieu, 1977). For Bourdieu all the individuals who ‘play the game’ must actually believe in the game; through processes of socio-cultural inculcation they come to interiorise the ‘rules’, which become a sort of ‘sens pratique’ (a practical sense) for them. The very existence of ‘Fields’ indeed, Bourdieu maintains, are dependent on the individual’s unquestioning belief and ‘investment’ in the game. By this, the structure of fields (and corresponding habituses) are reproduced over time, being rarely questioned by the individual.

With regards to my research the concept of field might be loosely defined as professional interpreter training in a higher education institution (Sslmit). In my interviews, participants regularly referred to the institution by name, positioning it as a nationally renowned interpreting school among Italian universities (see data in chapters 5-8, and my field notes, appendix B). This positioning could also be seen as giving the institution a high degree of ‘symbolic capital’ (accumulated prestige and social status in the Italian higher education system), and the students who managed to gain entrance to it (again evidenced in the data, chapters 5-8, and field notes), elevated ‘cultural capital’ (their potential acquisition of knowledge and skills in the interpreting field, and a nationally recognised qualification). My main focus in the research however, was with the various forms of capital assigned by my participants to the institution and the teachers, and the way in which that capital emerged in their narratives, affecting their projected identities as future professional interpreters and creating consistencies in the type of narratives told. The positioning of some teachers as being ‘top interpreters’ for example (with heightened levels of symbolic capital) appeared to make those teachers’ discourses about the nature of the interpreting job

(see section 2.10), and the resources to become one, recurrent in my participants' narratives, emerging at times as a source of anxiety and self-doubt (the effect perhaps of a form of 'symbolic violence'), (see chapter 5 for examples of this in the data).

Although Bourdieu makes no links himself, *habitus* could be interpreted as being intricately associated with a person's identity, their sense of place and being in the world. The expression of this, I argue, might be identified in the way that people narrate their experiences over time, particularly in the consistencies in those narrations within a specific field. Although I avoid making any broad claims in my research, the *habitus* of my participants entering the field of interpreting studies appeared to be influenced by teacher discourses (see chapter 5), specifically where teachers were assigned heightened levels of capital in the interpreting profession. The potential correlation between narrative and habitus has already been proposed by Smith (2007) who, drawing on Freeman (2006), McAdams (2006) and Taylor's (2006) common theoretical position, proposes that a life may be an aggregated construction of past constructions sedimented over time, and that one's habitus might 'give rise to certain types of story at certain moments in time and space?' (Smith, 2007: 395). I consider this in more detail in the concluding chapter of the thesis (chapter 10).

I now turn to my central analytical frame in this research, narrative positioning analysis, giving a brief description of its development and how it was used in the research to explore student identities in relation to becoming interpreters in the institution.

2.13 Narrative Positioning analysis

As mentioned previously (section 2.1), my analytical frame in the research was based on narrative positioning analysis, which draws principally on Davies and Harre's positioning theory (1990). In this section I look specifically at how positioning theory developed and how it was adopted and adapted to narrative research, particularly in relation to exploring an individual's social identity (see section 2.9.2).

Positioning was defined by Davies & Harre (Ibid) as ‘the discursive production of a diversity of selves’ (Ibid: 47), an approach to the identity paradigm which can be seen as aligning itself with social-constructivist approaches (De Fina, 2013), where identities are not seen as constructs of the mind but rather as part of on-going discursive processes in social interaction (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; De Fina, Schifffrin & Bamberg, 2008).

Davies & Harre argued that every utterance that a person makes in a conversation creates a social relationship among the participants, whereby the speaker takes up a certain position and offers others a position or positions from which to respond. This positioning was seen as being ‘in contrast to the linguistic tradition in which ‘syntax’, ‘semantics’ and ‘pragmatics’ are used in a way that implies an abstract realm of causally potent entities shaping actual speech’ (Davies & Harre, 1990: 43). In particular, Davies & Harre took issue with a static interpretation of ‘role’ in human interaction, the concept that humans inhabit and express themselves through a range of ‘fixed’ roles in their lives (e.g. husband, father, teacher, etc.), emphasizing instead the dynamic aspect of encounters where individuals are continually shifting position in relation to their interlocutors in different contexts.

Individuals therefore are dynamically, (re)creating and negotiating alignments with the social world in the emergent sequentiality of discourse, which tells their interlocutors something about their *social identities*, how they are positioning themselves in relation to ways of being in the social world (and how they are positioning their interlocutors as well).

Criticisms of Davies and Harré’s model however, have highlighted its dependence on the suggestion that ‘positions automatically come with attached world-views and philosophies’ (De Fina, 2013: 41), as well as the fact that the authors based their analysis on made-up examples of narratives (‘story-lines’ as they called them) which ‘presented a view of discourse as basically a succession of speech acts’ (Ibid).

One of the first researchers to apply positioning specifically to narrative research was Bamberg (1997), who addressed these criticisms by opening positions up to more than

fixed world-views and philosophies, as well as basing his research on actual talk-in-interaction instead of on contrived story-lines. Bamberg adopted and adapted positioning in narrative analysis to extend its principal use beyond an analysis of the language of ‘how people attend to one another in interactional settings’ (Ibid: 336), drawing from Davies and Harré’s model), to consider more traditional narrative analysis (i.e. Labov & Waletzky) ‘of what the language is referentially “about”, namely sequentially ordered (past) events and their evaluations’ (Ibid), (See chapter three, section 3.8 - 3.8.3 for a more detailed explanation and methodological considerations for the research).

Although Bamberg’s initial research was concerned with issues of human agency (1997), (as was the initial concern of Davies and Harré), it later developed to consider issues of ‘identity’ (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008). Further elaborations and interpretations of positioning analysis in narrative research have also focused specifically on questions of identity (Bamberg, De Fina & Schrifflin, 2011: Deppermann, 2007; Wortham, 2000, 2001: Georgakopoulou 2013; De Fina, 2013), and in response to the criticisms of Davies and Harré’s model have underscored:

- a. the locus where positioning needs to be studied is interaction
where people display local understandings of positions.... ;
- b. positioning is a reciprocal and dialogical process so that individuals not only take but also attribute positions and negotiate them in emergent ways;
- c. the relations between local processes and more global processes are very complex and cannot be seen as straightforward determination of macro to micro social structures of action and cognition.

(De Fina, 2013: 41-42)

Narrative positioning analysis, analyses narratives on three levels: the first is the actual talk, the talk-in-interaction (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008), how the narrative emerges in turn by turn talk and how the characters are positioned in relation to each other in the ‘narrative event’; the second is concerned with the actual telling, how the participants interact and co-construct the narrative in the ‘narrative-telling event’; and

the third looks to how the first two levels come together in relation to wider socio-cultural contexts and Discourses circulating in society.

The three-level approach to narrative analysis however, is not to be taken as three separate and distinct forms of analysis but rather as a unified, melded analytical process, three conceptual moves in an interrelated approach. The positioning that occurs in the way that the narrative characters are portrayed, the settings they are placed in, their described actions and the speech that is assigned them, is intricately linked to the positioning of the tellers in the interactive moment. How narratives are ratified or challenged in that moment reveals the Discourses that are circulating in the socio-cultural world of the participants, influencing the final product of the narrative itself and its *tellability*, what actually gets told, what is allowed to be told and what is silenced.

In the analysis therefore I look at how the narrative develops as a flow of situated discourse in a *narrative event*, adopting a form of classic discourse analysis (*level one*, according to Bamberg and Georgakopoulou, 2008). I then analyse how that discourse is maintained, interrupted, challenged and/or ratified by the participants in the *narrative-telling event*, how the narrative is co-produced consequently, and the reasons why this might occur (*level two*, Ibid). Both these conceptual approaches to analysis reveal the influence of larger *Discourses* (Gee's capital 'D' Discourses), ways of framing and describing the cultural world of my participants and the potent forces that come into play in shaping that world (*level three*, Bamberg and Georgakopoulou, 2008). The Discourses that emerge in narratives are therefore negotiated, accepted or refuted by the tellers, and these processes suggest alternative competing Discourses that seek to shape the emerging narrative as it is co-constructed. In this respect a level two analysis makes the overall analysis the most distinctive level from a relatively *straight forward* discourse analysis, as it seeks to understand why the flow of discourse emerges as it does, and what forces may be in play in shaping that discourse, thus bridging the micro and the macro levels of analysis.

In the final level of analysis, I also trace relevant positioning across the entire data, and draw on ethnographic observations in the field, to draw wider relevancies about how

my participants are constructing the institution and the role of the professional interpreter in relation to these wider Discourses (drawing on De Fina, 2013).

Recent work (Georgakopoulou, 2013; De Fina, 2013), has focused more on the third level of positioning; the level where the situated positioning of characters in the narrative-event (level one) and the interlocutors in the narrative-telling event (level two) are considered in relation to wider Discourses in the socio-cultural world, the level which Bamberg and Georgakopoulou describe as the ‘who am I?’ level of analysis (Georgakopoulou, 2013).

This recent work attempts to address two interconnected and yet separate issues: the on-going debate in positioning approaches to narrative analysis ‘regarding the ways in which we can analytically tap into aspects of a teller’s self that can be seen as stable and continuous’ (Georgakopoulou, 2013: 89); and finding a middle ground between talk-in-interaction approaches to identity which ‘centre exclusively on participant orientations at a local level and approaches that regard identity as basically determined by macro social processes’ (De Fina, 2013: 40).

Indeed, in both these approaches to narrative positioning analysis (Georgakopoulou 2013; De Fina, 2013) there is a central focus on how to establish the relevance of Discourses to positioning at a local and individual level. In their work on this, the authors have proposed analysing data over time for instances of ‘iterativity’ (e.g. repeated types of story-lines), (Georgakopoulou 2013), and for ‘patterns’ (tendencies in the way issues are viewed and dealt with by individuals), (De Fina, 2013), as well as drawing on ethnographic approaches to build a better understanding of the communities being studied.

In my research, I adopted De Fina’s approach (2013) in attempting to establish how local positioning moves may be developed beyond the individual, local level, to consider the more general relevancies of Discourses, by looking at ‘patterns’. Patterns

...point to the existence of collective representations and inventories, which in turn can be related to wider social processes such as economical and cultural struggles.

(De Fina, 2013: 45)

Patterns of Discourses across narrative data then affirm their relevancy both to individuals and wider communities beyond their localised, potentially one-off sourcing in situated talk. Getting at these Discourses requires the analyst to work from the bottom up, from talk-in-interaction towards the powerful Discourses that shape them and not vice-versa. In sum,

At one level, a close examination of talk can illustrate participants' stance towards ideologically laden categories and constructs through the analysis of discursive phenomena such as open referential categories, exploitation of indexicality, repetition, emphasis, logical reasoning to accomplish locally relevant actions and to convey images of themselves. But, (...) the nature and relevance of ideologies and Discourses to local positioning moves may also be established beyond the individual and local level by looking at patterns.

(Ibid.)

In addition to patterns however, key to De Fina's (and Georgakopoulou's) argument of how interpretive constructs can be supported at this level, is the inclusion of ethnographic data, data which (De Fina argues) allows the analyst not only to understand what is going on between the participants at a local level but also connects that local level to the wider community and the socio-cultural world that shapes it. In section 2.14 I talk in detail about ethnographic approaches to narrative research and my own approach in my research. In the following section (section 2.13.1) I firstly look at how indexicality was used in the research to look at the first and second levels of analysis in positioning theory, my participants' local positioning moves in relation to expressing their selves in relation to the world in situated talk.

2.13.1 *Indexicality* in narrative positioning analysis

In order to focus on the local construction of self in the interactive moment, I drew on Silverstein's concept of 'indexicality' (1976). The concept of 'indexicality', addresses

the need people have to show how they are aligning with the wider social world in their situated talk, as well as their need and ability to create new sets of alignments.

(Indexicality) can point to pre-existing social meaning, but the use of an indexical can also create social meaning. (For example, choosing to use the more elevated-sounding Greek plural “indices” rather than the English style plural “indexes” may be a way of claiming a certain kind of well-educated, perhaps somewhat pretentious, social identity, not just a way of showing that you already have this identity).

(Johnstone, 2009: 133)

Through many linguistic (and non-linguistic) forms, from ‘units as small as sounds to much more articulated constructs such as styles’ (De Fina, 2013: 42), indexicality is a semiotic process that associates the individual with specific identities that are socially recognisable.

... phonological and morphological structures are widely used to key speakers’ social status, role, affect, and epistemological perspective. Text structures such as repetition, reformulation, code-switching, and various sequential units are also linguistic resources for indexing such local contextual dimensions.

(Ochs, 1990: 292)

Indexicality, as it is used here, refers to selves from a social constructionist perspective (see section 2.13) in that it does not assume that they are fixed and stable. It refers to the way individuals show their social alignments in the situated moment, and how they identify themselves in that moment with particular social groups and the wider social world in general.

In relation to narratives and narrative tellings for example, indexicality can show how individuals speak with certain ‘voices’ in their narratives and in how they frame those narratives (see section 2.11.2), which index some social position and align them with a particular social group (Wortham, 2001). These voices can be indexed both lexically and/or prosodically, however they are also viewed as not being representative of any fixed notion of an individual’s identity due to the dialogical nature of all human communication (see sections 2.11- 2.11.1), which means that

(t)he voice does speak from some position, but it does so in the midst of an ongoing process of self-definition. The social position represented by a voice changes as it enters dialogue with other voices. So a voice represents not just a static social role, but a “whole person” ... who speaks from some position but is not fully defined by that position.

(Wortham, 2001: 39)

The analysis of these positionings over time, both in the narrative event and the narrative-telling event in diverse narratives, can lead to ‘patterns’ of positioning (see section 2.14) which might be considered as being more stable and continuous, allowing us to make tentative identity claims for the narrative-tellers (Ibid). Connecting these identities to wider Discourses however requires recourse to ethnographic data, the subject of the next section (2.14), (see chapter three, section 3.8.3, for how indexicality was applied methodologically in the data analysis).

2.14 Outlining an ethnographic approach to narrative research – Introduction.

Ethnography involves a prolonged period of engagement with, and observation of, the practices of members of a community, in order to gain insights into the semiotic resources they use and how these are deployed. In this way the analyst can investigate what is going on in a particular community beyond the specific interaction of his/her individual participants,

...to discover which categories and processes have a more general significance (beyond the local context) through the analysis of semiotic patterns. In the case of story-telling and identity, for example, repetition of story-telling roles, actions, positions and other elements across story-tellers and stories points to the possibility of significance beyond the level of particular interactions.

(De Fina, 2013: 46)

By using narrative positioning analysis as an analytic tool, in particular level three analysis with its concern for an individual’s positioning towards wider Discourses (see section 2.13), the analyst can identify common, recurring patterns of stances between

individuals in a community, to draw conclusions about collective positioning processes (Ibid) but

(a)t the same time, understanding what these Discourses are (their contents, semantics, values attached, etc.), involves having access to ethnographic data and knowledge.

(Ibid)

My approach to ethnography in this research does not correspond to a *full* ethnographic study however, but rather to a particular *ethnographic perspective* (section 2.18), intended to draw out the meaning of localised narratives into the wider practices of the student community.

In the following sections of this chapter I look at the field of ethnography briefly (section 2.15) and ethnography's relation to the language sciences (section 2.16). I then consider some of the criticisms levelled against it as an academic discipline and the counter arguments in its favour (section 2.17 – 2.17.2) before outlining my own ethnographic perspective in the research, and how it aligns with other similar research.

2.15 Ethnography

Contemporary ethnography is quite distinct from the language sciences (i.e. discourse analysis and conversation analysis, among others) in its *emic* approach (see below) to researching cultural groups over a relatively long period of time (often a year, or even more). It requires the ethnographer to immerse him/herself in the other *culture* (see below) and gain epistemic insights by various means or ethnographic tools (i.e. participant observation, taking extensive field notes and open or semi-structured interviews among others) to seek to engage with that culture and acquire deep understandings about its participants, their environment, practices and processes.

Defining what culture actually means has always been a complex and thorny issue, especially across disciplines (Baldwin *et al.*, 2006). However, here I adopt Bloome (2012) in defining it as

...a set of shared and learned standards (expectations) for acting, feeling, believing, using language, and valuing...(and) a set of shared and situated models of how the world works and how things mean.

(Ibid: 10)

Culture underpins the way that individuals attempt to frame the world then, but this does not mean that they are cultural *dupes* however, as ‘it is always a mistake to equate the resources of a language, culture or society with those of its members’ (Blommaert & Dong, 2010: 2), nobody after all is a perfect member of their culture or society. Rather, people *do* aspects of their culture in their everyday lives, displaying through situated social interaction, how they share common views about how to interpret experience. It is this emphasise on *doing* culture that led Street (Street, 1993; Heath and Street, 2008) to argue that instead of a noun, culture should rather be treated as a verb, as it is not a fixed entity but part of continually emergent social processes.

As individuals do not conform completely to cultural models, ethnography is concerned with describing ‘the sometimes chaotic, contradictory, polymorph character of human behaviour in concrete settings’ (Blommaert, 2007). In particular it seeks to examine the everyday, cultural life of a social group, to understand what is happening and what it means to that social group from an emic (insider) perspective rather than from an *etic* (outsider) perspective. Although the emphasis is always on an emic approach, there are no clear demarcation lines between the two however, as

...it is difficult to imagine any ethnographic statement that is not a blend of these. A statement would almost always contain some assumptions about perceptions or intent on the part of group members, but it would also be constructed by the ethnographer in terms of his own professional context and goals.

(Agar, 1996: 293)

Despite this blurring of boundaries (also described in Headland *et al*, 1990) ethnography is principally concerned with generating ‘thick descriptions’ (Geertz, 1973) of human behaviour, the forms of behaviour that individuals display that make them identifiable as members of a particular culture, and a means of making that behaviour understandable in some way to an outsider.

Furthermore, ethnography is *inductive*, moving from empirical data towards theory and not vice versa (a deductive approach). This means that ethnography slowly builds a picture through case studies (using what is usually referred to as the *case method*) to arrive at theoretical models. These theoretical models may already exist in the ethnographer’s mind but he/she does not approach the data in an attempt to make it fit the model(s), but rather the other way round,

A good case study, therefore, enables the analyst to establish theoretically valid connections between events and phenomena, which previously were ineluctable. From this point of view, the search for a "typical" case for analytical exposition is ‘likely to be less fruitful than a ‘telling case’.

(Mitchell, 1984: 239)

This process limits an approach based on a simple pre-set line of inquiry, and involves the ethnographer in a close relationship with the people under research, a process that Hymes describes as ‘democratic’ (1980: 89), and one that can alter the perceptions of both researcher and participant by its end (Ibid) (see chapter three, section 3.9.2, for an account of this process with regards to interviewing practices).

2.16 Ethnography: Language and context

From a language point of view, ethnography has sometimes been seen as a technique for describing the social and cultural ‘context’ in which language emerges. Blommaert & Dong (2010) argue however that such an approach separates language from context, whereby one might claim that ‘..the study of talk is a matter for linguistics, conversation analysis or discourse analysis, (and) the study of context is a matter for ethnography’ (Ibid: 4). Blommaert & Dong maintain that as ethnography has its

origins in anthropology its basic architecture already contains ontologies and epistemologies that are situated within that larger tradition. Citing Hymes (1964b) they make the point that ‘it is anthropology’s task to coordinate knowledge about language from the viewpoint of *man*’ (cited in Blommaert & Dong, 2010: 6, original emphasis). Consequently,

This means that language is approached as something that has a certain relevance to man [and woman, *this author*], and man in anthropology is seen as a creature whose existence is narrowly linked, conditioned or determined by society, community, the group, culture.... questions about language take the shape of questions of how language works and operates for, with and by humans-as-social-beings.

(Ibid: 7)

In ethnography then language can be seen as being deeply situated in the social and cultural practices of the individual and the group. Furthermore, language can also be seen as being ‘performed’ by people in a social environment (Goffman, 1959) and thus it is a *process* evolving over time and not a static *product*, revealing as it emerges the underlying web of power relations as well as social, cultural, political and emotional investments on the part of the speaker.

2.17 Criticisms of ethnography – Introduction

Ethnography has its supporters as well as its detractors. In the following sections therefore I highlight some of the major criticisms and counter arguments in ethnographically orientated research with regard to ontological and epistemological concerns (section 2.17.1), and theoretical and methodological ones (section 2.17.2), clarifying my own approach.

2.17.1 Criticisms of ethnography: Ontological and epistemological concerns

With regards to ontological and epistemological questions, criticisms have been levelled at ethnography from within the discipline. In his provocatively entitled series

of essays ‘What’s wrong with ethnography?’, Hammersley (1992) brings the long debate in the social sciences over positivist and post-structuralist approaches to research into the field of ethnography, calling them alternatively ‘naïve realism’ and ‘relativism’. Hammersley raises the criticism that ethnographers themselves adopt positions that undermine their own research, by either taking extreme realism positions that assume a reality that is clear cut and easily accessible, or relativist ones that question the description of any ‘reality’. In attempting to address this, Hammersley adopts a realism approach, but one that is framed as being more tentative, more ‘subtle’ (see below). Drawing on Roy Bhaskar’s critical realism (1975), he argues that

We can maintain a belief in the existence of phenomena independent of our claims about them, and in their knowability, without assuming that we can have unmediated contact with them and therefore that we can know with certainty whether our knowledge of them is valid or invalid. The most promising strategy for resolving the problem ... is to adopt a more *subtle form of realism*.

(Hammersley, 1992: 50. My emphasis)

Hammersley introduces this ‘subtle realism’ then as a concept that attempts to bridge the gap between the realist and relativist camps. ‘Subtle realism’ takes the realist position that there is a social reality out there, independent of an individual’s knowledge of it, but it guards against a simplistic view that we can have ‘unmediated contact’ with that reality. Hammersley urges ethnographers to seek for that reality then but he sensitizes them to the ever-present ‘relativist’ position that we must continually interpret reality and that our interpretations are always open to mistakes and misunderstandings. Hammersley uses this more ‘aware’ realism to attempt to steer a path through and potentially beyond the ambivalence in ethnography, although the debate has by no means been settled (see Banfield 2004 for a critique). I approached my own research from the same perspective as Hammersley, a ‘subtle realism’ approach, maintaining a belief that there is a social reality out there but that it can only ever be examined in a mediated way, which is always open to mistakes in interpretation. Consequently, I make no claims in this thesis that I have uncovered *the truth* of how my participants perceive the institution and their place in it, but through

careful analysis make suggestions as to how they might (see chapter three, section 3.9.1, on post-modernist perspectives on interviewing).

2.17.2 Criticisms of ethnography: Theoretical and methodological concerns

Criticisms of ethnography from a theoretical and methodological approach have centred on some of the following arguments:

1. Ethnographic research is not precise enough in its numerical specifications, using adverbs such as ‘frequently’ or ‘often’ and this lack of quantification leaves it open to the accusation of being *impressionistic*.
2. Ethnographers often concentrate on only a small number of samples which have little value as they are not generalizable;
3. As ethnography does not follow a well-designed and explicit procedure it is not ‘replicable’, a key feature of scientific enquiry.

(Paraphrased from Hammersley, 1993)

Hammersley again has tried to answer these in the following way:

1. Ethnography does not reject quantification and some research does use it. Where differences are large and obvious they may be reported in imprecise ways without loss.
2. Studying small samples is a trade-off between cases in depth or in breadth where ethnography is usually more concerned with the former. This is different from survey research, which does the reverse. Sacrificing depth can lead to researchers losing information and missing key features of the cases they are studying. Moreover, one may study a small selection of cases that are said to be representative of a population, which is assumed to be structured similarly in key dimensions.
3. Replication is not always possible in natural science and therefore it is not the only way that scientists assess one another’s work. Moreover, no two ‘social

events' are ever identical. Therefore, Ethnography's lack of replicability does not invalidate the validity of its findings.

(Paraphrased from Hammersley, 1993)

As ethnography seeks an emic (insider) understanding of a cultural group from an etic (outsider) position, the researcher (usually coming from the latter) is always open to the criticism that he/she can only ever have a partial understanding of the world he/she attempts to portray and that even that is heavily influenced by his/her own cultural world perspective. Whilst this is rarely ever wholly refuted, the ethnographer does have an instrument at his/her disposition to close the gap so to speak, and that is 'reflexivity'. In chapter three (section 3.10.2), I describe what 'reflexivity' means and its importance in my research into the cultural world of the student-interpreter in Sslmit, a world of which I am part (as an English teacher and tutor in the institution) but also separate from (standing on the other side of the fence from the student, with his/her cultural understandings of the world and institutional processes).

I now turn to describe my *ethnographic perspective* in the research.

2.18 An ethnographic study and an ethnographic perspective

In line with the central points made about ethnographic studies in section 2.15, a comprehensive ethnography involves

... the framing, conceptualizing, conducting, interpreting, writing, and reporting associated with a broad, in-depth, and long-term study of a social or cultural group.

(Green & Bloome, 1997: 183)

However, research can also engage with ethnography without adopting such a comprehensive approach, by taking an *ethnographic perspective*, by which

we mean that it is possible to take a more focused approach (i.e. do less than a comprehensive ethnography) to study particular aspects of everyday life and cultural practices of a social group.

(Ibid: 183)

Research in the field of education that takes an ethnographic perspective (a more focused approach in studying particular aspects of a group's everyday life and cultural practices), has already been highlighted as being important by Heath and Street (2008) in their concern with how it might provide greater understandings about

1. Individuals striving to become experts in something
2. Groups in identity-making
3. Institutions of formal education

(Ibid: 5)

Aligning with this, I saw an ethnographic perspective in narrative studies, centring on these particular aspects of my participants' lives (i.e. striving to become professional interpreters, and exploring their identities in this context and the wider context of the institution), as drawing their narratives on these issues out of localised interaction, connecting them to wider Discourses, and portraying a more detailed picture of the student community.

Adopting this approach then, although my research was primarily concerned with narrative accounts of my participants' lives in the institution I also drew on ethnographic data outside those narratives, based on field notes of other interactions and observations, and my own personal experiences based on seven years working and interacting with students in the institution. This understanding aided me in sensitising myself to particular narrative accounts relevant to how my participants were orientating towards their future professional careers as interpreters, and how these were evidenced in their narratives of everyday life and practices in the institution.

2.19 Conclusions

In conclusion, my research sort to answer the following questions (see section 1.2):

1. Over the period of their first academic year, how do interpreter-students perceive and negotiate Discourses in the institution, and how do these Discourses affect their constructions of the identity of a professional interpreter and the resources to become one?
2. How do these Discourses also shape their identities as interpreter-students and affect their stated future goals?

In order to address these questions, I engaged with narrative research, seeing narrative from an epistemological perspective as ‘a mode of thought, communication, and apprehension of reality’ (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012: 15), (see section 2.2). My analytical frame was based on *narrative positioning analysis* (see section 2.13), which explores narrative data on three levels: the inextricability of the two events present in any narrative episode, the narrative event (level one) and the narrative-telling event (level two), and how the tellers position themselves in these two events in relation to wider Discourses in the socio-cultural world (level three). These three levels of positioning were seen as offering ‘a tangible and easy to operationalize analytic apparatus for linking local telling roles with larger social identities’ (Georgakopoulou, 2013: 91).

However, in order to identify which categories and processes had significance beyond the local context of situated narratives an analysis of semiotic ‘patterns’ was required across the data (see section 2.14). This involved focusing on localised displays of identity through an analysis of indexicality in both the narrative event and the narrative-telling event (see section 2.13.1), and ‘the repetition of story-telling roles, actions, positions and other elements across story-tellers and stories’ (De Fina, 2013: 46). Moreover, to understand what Discourses were relevant to my participants, ‘their contents, semantics, values added, etc.’ (Ibid), ethnographic data was drawn on when considered relevant (see section 2.15).

I now go on to look at the methodologies that were adopted in carrying out this research.

Chapter Three

Research methodology

3.1. Introduction

In the following chapter I to present my research plan (section 3.2), introducing my participants and providing a brief biographical background (sections 3.3). I then outline my ethnographic methodology (section 3.4), and go on to give an overview of how ethnographic perspectives on education have relevancy to my own approach (sections 3.5 – 3.5.3). In section 3.6, I show how the narrative research data were collected and organised before the analytical process began. In section 3.7, I describe my initial analytical procedures with regard to the content and form the narratives took, and in sections 3.8 – 3.9.3 I detail how narrative positioning analysis was developed and applied in the research. In the final sections of the chapter (3.10 – 3.10.3) I highlight some of the problems I experienced in approaching the interview process and the ways in which I attempted to resolve those problems.

3.2 Research plan, timeline and itinerary

I proposed the research project to students entering the institution with English as their principal language of study at the beginning of the academic year in 2012; this took place in the classroom during their first week of term (8/10/2012 - 12/10/2012)²⁶. After a general introduction to the research, and a specification that it required participants who were intending to become interpreters, information sheets and consent forms were distributed to those students who had shown an interest, giving detailed information about the project (described as investigating their changing views towards their studies over the period of their first year, with a view to suggesting changes in the institution's curricula), guarantees of anonymity, and the option to withdraw from the research at any point if so desired. Students wishing to participate

²⁶ First year students were divided into two classes by the institution.

were given a maximum of 48 hours to decide whether or not they wanted to be part of the research and communicate this to me via e-mail.

Initially, I had 15 positive responses and organised a one hour recorded interview with each student as part of the initial research. Five of these however informed me at a later date that they were no longer interested. Overall then, I interviewed 10 students, and these interviews were also directed at ascertaining each individual candidate's suitability for the whole research project, part of a further selection process to choose a smaller cohort for group interviews. The individual interviews took place between the 3-14th, December 2012²⁷.

The criteria for suitability was based principally on how interested my prospective candidates appeared to be to participate in the research, and whether or not they might work well in a group dynamic (in relation to the group interviews I planned to carry out after the individual interviews). I decided to exclude those students who appeared to be more passive in the interview situation (i.e. only speaking when I elicited information and/or giving principally succinct, direct answers to my questions), or overly active (not listening to my questions carefully or being excessively loud and/or opinionated), which might have limited talk in group interviews. For the same reason, I also excluded those students who were more taciturn, and/or evidently intimidated by my presence, potentially due to my position on the teaching staff, (see appendix B, my field notes, for my thoughts and views on the individual research candidates, pages 724-730). As I wanted to keep the group session relatively small, to allow interaction between all its members, I finally selected five participants to continue to the group interview stage, and communicated this to them via e-mail²⁸.

I use the term 'group interview' in the research as I wanted to emphasise the participants' co-constructed role in its dynamic, and their control over what they wanted to talk about. The term 'Focus group' suggests a specific itinerary on the researcher's behalf which was not in line with my ethnographic approach to interviewing (see section 3.9.2). However, in relation to 'focus group' perspectives on

²⁷ Times and dates that best suited their individual availability were established via e-mail.

²⁸ This communication took place in the week from the 22nd-26th October, 2012.

the types of interview that can be carried out, I contextualise my cohort as a 'minigroup' (Greenbaum, 1998: 2) which 'generally contains 4 to 6 persons' (Ibid). This allowed for each member of the group to talk for extended periods of time, something that a 'Full group' interview (Ibid) would not have allowed for. Full groups normally involve '8 to 10 persons' (Ibid) where interviews often last around 90 minutes (as mine did), allowing individuals on average only 9 to 10 minutes of potential talk. As my aim was to give as much time as possible for my participants to express their thoughts and views, a 'minigroup' was seen as being more preferable. Moreover, small groups allow for a greater amount of interactive processes and co-constructed meaning (Wilkinson, 1998), an essential part of my research (see section 2.13).

From an ethnographic perspective (which was adopted in this research, see section 2.14) the researcher is particularly interested in exploring *what is going on* between the participants in a particular community, both in the local interactive moment and over time. The typical ethnographic 'case study' therefore is not concerned primarily with multiple interviews with different groups of people, to identify perhaps wider quantitative patterns in variable data, but rather with the developments that occur within individual groups of people in a specific cultural community. For this reason, my research did not adopt a typical focus group approach which might have sought to interview two or more groups over time, focusing instead on the interrelationships between individuals in one group as they navigated their first year in the institution. This was also an integral part of why I chose to work specifically with first year students, as their early development in the institution was seen as being their most formative period, coming as they did from Italian secondary schools, and being exposed to the Discourses and practices of the institution for the first time.

Another important decision was the choice of language with which to conduct the interviews. The eventual decision to carry them out through the medium of English was influenced by the presence of a non-native Italian speaker in the group (Rosa, see chapter 3, section 3.3), whose self-evaluated level of Italian was described as being far inferior to the other participants' level in English, limiting her ability to interact with the group and to express her thoughts and views. Moreover, as the participants' first

language of study in the institution was English it was thought that it might not be out of place to make English the established language of communication. Indeed, when the issue of how the interviews were to be conducted was raised, where I suggested a choice between Italian and English, all the participants expressed a wish to speak English, perhaps as a means of continuing to practice and potentially improve their language skills in the group setting.

On reflection, the group choice of speaking in English to describe their experiences in an Italian institution positioned me and them in two different ways in the interviews (as emerged and observed in the data, see chapters 5-8). At times I was positioned as a *language teacher*, and the group as language students, this emerged when I was asked by various participants to correct their language, or translate an Italian word or term into English for them. At other times I was positioned as a *foreign researcher* who needed aspects of Italian culture and Italian institutions explained to me, shifting the power relations relative to who was directing the interview. My identification by the group as a native speaker of English, and perhaps therefore as a representative of English *culture*, may also have influenced the participants' evident need to explain their own culture to me.

Returning to the actual research project, after the first interview session was completed, an initial analysis was carried out by myself in an attempt to identify any salient and commonly shared themes (see chapter 4 for a summary of this analysis). These became a partial focus for me in the second session of interviews, and sometimes were re-introduced by myself to elicit further thought and comment (see section 3.9.2, regarding ethnographic interview techniques). At the end of the data-gathering period (the end of June 2013) I began the long process of writing up transcripts of the interviews.

The following is a graphic representation of the timeline for the various stages of the research involving the participants:

Table 1. Research timeline

8-12th Oct 2012	3-14th Dec 2012	21st Feb 2013	6-16th May 2013	19th June 2013	July - Sept 2013
Research proposal made to students	First interview session	First workshop session	Second interview session	Second workshop session	Transcripts written up

The following table (table 2), summarises how interviews were conducted, the participants present, dates, initiation times, durations and location. The location gives details of the number of seats per classroom, as a rough approximation of classroom size, as well as its general position in the building (floor/facing road or internal courtyard).

Table 2. Interview sessions

Session	Participants	Date	Start time	Duration	Location (Name/description)
First one-to-one interview	Rosa	03/12/2012	11 am	00:18:17	Aula D3/ 30 seats, 3 rd floor, facing road.
	Matteo	03/12/2012	13.30 pm	00:15:50	Aula E2/ 24 seats, 2nd floor, facing road.
	Maria	05/12/2012	9.30 am	00:19:13	Aula 1/ 40 seats, ground floor, facing internal courtyard.
	Silvia	10/12/2012	16.30 pm	00:19:42	Aula D3/ 30 seats, 3 rd floor, facing road.
	Federico	14/12/2012	15.00 pm	00:21:14	Aula E2/ 24 seats, 2nd floor, facing road.
First workshop	Rosa				
	Matteo				

	Maria	21/12/2013	16.30 pm	01:18:20	Aula D3/ 30 seats, 3 rd floor, facing road.
	Silvia				
	Federico				
Second one-to-one interview	Maria	06/03/2013	11.00 am	00:58:02	Aula D3/ 30 seats, 3 rd floor, facing road.
	Silvia	08/03/2013	14.30 pm	01:10:47	Aula E2/ 24 seats, 2 nd floor, facing road.
	Federico	10/03/2013	12.30 pm	00:50:00	Aula E2/ 24 seats, 2 nd floor, facing road.
	Rosa	13/03/2013	18.00 pm	00:52:40	Aula D3/ 30 seats, 3 rd floor, facing road.
	Matteo	16/03/2013	11.30 pm	01:26:50	Aula D2/ 24 seats, 2 nd floor, facing road.
Second workshop	Rosa	19/06/2013	12.30 pm	01:05:21	Aula D3/ 30 seats, 3 rd floor, facing road.
	Matteo				
	Maria				
	Silvia				
	Federico				

I now go on to introduce the participants (section 3.3) and give a brief biographical history (section 3.3.1), which was based on my ethnographic field notes (see appendix B) and information that emerged in the interview sessions.

3.3 The participants - Introduction

The following is a list of the participants in the research, together with their gender, age, as well as their first, second and third languages of study. Apart from one student from Iran (Rosa) all the participants were Italian and came from diverse regions in Italy, ranging from the far North of the country to the South.

Table 3. Participants

PARTICIPANT NAMES (pseudonyms)	GENDER (M=MALE, F= FEMALE)	AGE	FIRST LANGUAGE STUDIED	SECOND LANGUAGE STUDIED	THIRD LANGUAGE STUDIED
Maria	F	20	English	Russian	Chinese
Matteo	M	25	English	German	Japanese
Federico	M	22	English	Russian	Slovak
Silvia	F	21	English	Chinese	Japanese
Rosa (Iranian) ²⁹	F	20	English	German	Chinese

3.3.1 The participants: Brief biographical outline

Maria had already tried, unsuccessfully, to enter Sslmit, subsequently taking a year out to travel around the world with her boyfriend. On her return she had applied to both Sslmit and Trieste University, and although she had failed to get into Trieste she was successful on her second attempt at Sslmit.

Matteo was the oldest of the participants, having already completed a degree in oriental languages at ‘la Sapienza’ university in Rome (first language, Japanese). He had come to Sslmit with only one European language (English) and was concerned that he would have to learn a second language from a beginner level, which might place him at a disadvantage, as most of his peers had good second languages as well.

Federico was at Medical school previously, but had decided that he was not suited to the profession after his first year and applied to Sslmit, being successful on his first application. He thought his English was ‘all right’ but he wanted to learn other languages that were very different from it, choosing Russian and Slovak.

²⁹ Rosa subsequently changed her third language to Arabic in her second term.

Silvia had worked in tourism for a few years and had tried unsuccessfully on two separate occasions to enter Sslmit. On her third attempt (in 2012) she had finally succeeded. She was very excited to have made it into the institution but worried that all the other students would be better than her.

Rosa had come to Italy from Iran when she was 18. Although she had initially thought of studying languages at Sslmit she was unimpressed by the town (Forlì) which she described as being too quiet, preferring instead to transfer to another faculty in Rimini (a lively coastal town). After one year in Rimini however she became more aware of Sslmit's reputation as a school of excellence for languages, interpreting and translation and decided to apply. She was successful on her first application. Rosa was initially worried about the amount of study that was required in Sslmit and missed her time in Rimini a little.

3.4 Ethnographic methodologies in the research: Field notes

Although my research was principally based on narrative research, I adopted an ethnographic perspective, less than a full ethnographic study (see chapter two, section 2.18), drawing on my seven-year experience in the institution (both as a teacher and student tutor), as well as taking field notes of my observations and interactions with my participants both inside and outside the interview context. In this section I describe how my field notes were made (see appendix B for a full transcript), and how they were relevant to the research. In the following sections (3.5 – 3.5.3) I go on to contextualise the type of ethnographic perspective I adopted in relation to research into education, and how that had an influence on my methodological approach in my own research.

I began my field notes in the week commencing the 8th October 2012, the week when I introduced the research project to my potential cohort (see section 3.2). Initially, these notes recorded my thoughts and observations on the class reaction to the proposal and encounters with individual students after the proposal, in the institution as well as in the streets and cafes outside. Further field notes were made after each of my initial

interviews (Ibid), as well as after subsequent chance encounters with both those students I had selected and those I had not. The remaining field notes were written after each interview session (both individual and group) and further encounters with my participants both on and off campus.

Based on Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein (1997), my field notes were organised in the following manner:

1. The date, time and place of observation
2. Recorded facts, details of what occurred at the site
3. Personal responses to the fact of recording field notes, thoughts and impressions
4. Attention to specific words, phrases, summaries of conversations
5. Questions about the people or behaviour at the site for further investigation
6. Page numbers to keep all observations in chronological order.

When possible I jotted down words or phrases in a notebook while at the field site (any place where I was interacting with students), in order to remember potentially salient things when I was writing up my full notes. I also described as much as I could remember about the occasion, the physical location (i.e. in a side street, in front of the campus doors, at a café, etc.) and the sequence of events (i.e. was I approached or did I approach the person).

The role of field notes in research that takes an ethnographic perspective, is to allow the researcher to make a set of observations, at different times and places, that offer the possibility of establishing

contextual connections (“this is an effect of that”, “this belongs to the same category as that”, “this can only be understood in relation to that”...)

(Blommaert & Dong, 2010:31)

These connections can serve to enrich the research process by relating them to the research questions posed, or other questions that may have arisen in other situations,

specifically interviews with participants, and what they said in those contexts. Field notes can also help to focus researchers' observations in subsequent occasions as well as making them reflect on their own role in their encounters with their participants, how comfortable or uncomfortable they felt and the possible influences they had on what was said and done.

3.5 An ethnographic perspective on educational practices

My ethnographic perspective was aligned with other research carried out in educational institutions (see section 2.18) to explore similar areas of interest as those raised by my research questions (see section 1.2), namely:

1. Individuals striving to become experts in something
2. Groups in identity-making
3. Institutions of formal education

(Heath and Street 2008: 5)

In the following sections (3.5.1 – 3.5.3) I outline how each of these areas was approached in my research and the methodological choices I made based on these.

3.5.1 An ethnographic perspective: Individuals striving to become experts in institutions of formal education

In line with this ethnographic perspective in my research, I specifically chose those students who expressed a preference for becoming future experts in interpreting, and not translation (see section 3.2). The institution's syllabus for the three-year undergraduate degree provides compulsory courses in both interpreting and translation, and students graduate in what is generically termed 'cultural mediation'. Hence, the institution does not give preference to either of the disciplines (interpreting or translation), and courses on both run parallel throughout the three-year period.

However, post-graduate studies require the student to choose one of either of these professional trajectories (see chapter one, section 1.3 about the institution). In my research, as I had specifically requested volunteers who wanted to become interpreters, I explored this initial preference for interpreting over translation, examining their thoughts and reasons for such a choice and how they developed in the group dynamic of like-minded individuals (fellow participants) over the period of their first year in the institution.

3.5.2 An ethnographic perspective: Groups in identity-making in institutions of formal education

Drawing from Green and Bloome (1997) and Bloome (2012), I took the position that an ethnographic perspective that centres on education and classroom experiences (my own approach) is particularly centred on investigating how students construct, negotiate and share meaning (with all its contradictions and complexities), and how they construct that meaning in relation to classroom processes over time. The co-constructed narratives that my participants told about those classroom processes (in the workshop interviews) were approached as a group means of constructing their own interpreter-student identities, as well as the identity of the professional interpreter. In order to facilitate this process participant numbers were intentionally kept small as more than five would have potentially meant that the voices of some students might have been absent from the interaction.

3.5.3 An ethnographic perspective: The classroom

Although narratives about what happened in the classroom and its effects on my participants, was part of my ethnographic perspective in the research, it was not limited to that confine alone. Classrooms can be seen as being physically separate from the rest of everyday life, however they are also social and cultural spaces which are continually connecting with the wider social and cultural world of the individual (Street, 1984; 1995). I therefore took the position (drawing also from scholars such as

Heath, 2012) that how students engage with what they experience in the classroom is intricately linked to their lives outside the classroom (in the institution and in their private lives) and vice-versa; a student's sense of self, competence and worth, is formed by the interaction between the two, what they bring into the classroom and what they take away from it (Bloome, 2012).

Overall, I adopted Bloome's view that ethnographic perspectives on the classroom

...(contribute) to re-conceptualising what a classroom is and what happens there: it illuminates a subset of a society's socialization and enculturation efforts; it articulates the relationship of dominant social, cultural, and linguistic groups to non-dominant groups; it generates new directions in curricula and instruction that address long-standing inequities; and it challenges extant educational theories of learning and knowledge.

(Ibid: 7)

Seen from this perspective an ethnographic approach to the classroom would appear to have a lot in common with critical social science approaches, being concerned with the dominant and non-dominant groups in society, corresponding inequalities, and criticising the ideologies and socio-political discourses that subjugate individuals. However, as Bloome points out (Ibid), because of its principally emic perspective (its concern with the insider's interpretation of events) classroom ethnographic perspectives do not foreground critical theories about societal structure and inequitable power relations when analysing class life, but rather acknowledge and describe them when they become salient in the lives of the participants under research. Drawing from Street (2003), Bloome describes an ethnography that centres on the classroom as being a form of critical ethnography with a *small c* rather than *capital C*. The *small c* indicates that whilst an ethnographic perspective on the classroom may gain insights from critical perspectives it does not adopt them a priori but only when they may provide insights into understanding the human condition in and through the classroom.

Another important aspect of an ethnographic perspective on the classroom is that, unlike much educational research, it is not concerned with classroom 'moral dualisms' (Bloome, 2012: 12), a concern with separating classroom practices into 'good' and

‘bad’ categories regarding theories of what is academically desirable from a pedagogic perspective. Thus, it does not seek to answer questions such as: is the academic learning/teaching ‘good’ or ‘bad’; are the academic materials ‘sufficient’ or ‘insufficient’ and are students ‘more’ or ‘less’ motivated (Ibid). This form of ethnography is rather more concerned with studying complex human activities and relationships in their fullness and the shifts and changes in the students’ relation to the institution (with its various ideologies and discourses) through a holistic lens. It seeks to understand the processes that are going on in the particular cultural and educational environment and how and why students behave as they do in relation to that environment. Thus, a classroom ethnographic perspective does not enter the research arena with a specific list of things to investigate but rather probes the data it accumulates for recurring themes that might throw light on cultural patterns and models of behaviour.

Drawing from this then, although language learning for example may have been a central concern for my participants, I was not concerned with analysing the reasons for success or failure in that process (the dualism of good or bad language teaching and/or learning), but rather on the effect it had on their developing understandings of what it meant to become experts in their chosen field, interpreting. From this perspective I engaged with issues of language teaching methodology and ideology but only in relation to how these affected the students’ changing sense of self, as expressed through their narratives of their positioning of themselves as potential future interpreters. I therefore chose to remain outside the scope of debates on language acquisition, deciding to focus instead on investigating the interpreter community from *an ethnographic point of view*, the dynamics between the individual, the group and the institution as they emerged through all my data.

3.6 Overview of the narrative research data

Turning to the interview data itself and the analysis of the narratives that emerged from it, transcripts of all the interviews were written up drawing on the *Jefferson system* (1984), which identified the duration of pauses in speech, lengthened syllables,

variations in intonation patterns, heightened word stress, latching and overlapping, among others. The following represents the key for the symbols used across all the transcripts (see appendix A for the transcripts themselves):

- (.) micro pause <0.5 sec
- (..) brief pause <0.5 sec >1.0 sec
- (...) pause >1.0 sec <1.5 sec
- (2.0) longer pause in seconds
- :
- ::
- (()) transcriber's comments
- (xx) uncertain passages of script (quantity of x suggests amount of text inaudible)
- ? raising intonation
- yes heightened stress
- YES (Capital letters) Significantly heightened stress
- = latching (no pause between turn taking)
- cut-off of prior word (e.g. th- think)
- [beginning of overlap (overlap ends at end of line where represented)
- / rising intonation
- \ falling intonation
- Γ rising and sustained intonation
- ? rising intonation signaling a question

When presenting the transcripts in the data analysis phase of the research (see chapters 5-8) I identified each extract in the following manner:

(Group interview 1. Recording times, 54.05 – 57.00. See appendix A: p.63, lines 1686 - 1735)

This information specified the interview session from which the extract was taken using a numerical system, where '1' signified a first session interview, and '2' a second session interview, i.e. Rosa 1 (first interview) and Rosa 2 (second interview). 'Recording times' identified the start and finish times in the recorded interview where

the extract emerged, although these were not given for very short extracts that were not the principal part of the analysis. ‘Appendix A’, referred to the written transcripts (represented in the appendices) where the extract occurred, with the initial page number where the extract began, and the specific line numbers. When presenting the extract in the analysis chapters, the original line numbers were replaced with a numerical system commencing with 1, to simplify the process of identifying the relevant part of the narrative under analysis, which might be complicated when referring to numbers in the thousands (i.e. line 1689). Very short extracts were not numbered, unless there was a specific analysis carried out of linguistic elements in the extract.

Regarding the research phase, after all the original transcripts had been written up, I listened and read repeatedly for instances of narrative episodes in the data, moments in the data which corresponded to Toolan’s definition of a narrative episode (2001) as being a recounting of ‘things spatiotemporally distant: here’s a present teller, seemingly close to the addressee (reader or listener), and there at a distance is the tale or the topic’ (Ibid:1), (See chapter two, section 2.4 for a discussion of this).

The following show the number of narrative episodes in relation to interview time across the data (overall time taken for the narratives identified), where an episode ranged from anything from ten seconds to ten minutes:

First session interviews

Table 4. Number of narrative episodes in first session of data and duration of episodes

Participants	Interview time (Hours/minutes/seconds)	Narrative episodes
Federico	00:21:14	22
Maria	00:19:13	24
Matteo	00:15:50	15
Rosa	00:18:17	29
Silvia	00:19:42	24
Group	01:18:20	65

Second session interviews

Table 5. Number of narrative episodes in second session of data and duration of episodes

Participants	Interview time (Hours/minutes/seconds)	Narrative episodes
Federico	00:50:00	28
Maria	00:58:02	35
Matteo	01:26:50	32
Rosa	00:52:40	39
Silvia	01:10:47	43
Group	01:05:21	52

General summary

Table 6. General summary of narrative episodes in all data and duration of episodes

Total number of narrative episodes	384
Total time	09:16:16 minutes

Over a period of many months, I gradually coded these narrative episodes by analysing their content, eventually arriving at recurrent themes that were salient to my research questions (see chapter one, section 1.2). I also analysed my field notes (see appendix B) to see if the same themes (or other potentially relevant themes) emerged in data outside the interviews. I report a summary of the central themes and sub-themes identified in these narrative episodes in chapter four.

I now go on to describe how the content and form of narratives were analysed.

3.7 Analysing narrative content and form

With regard to the analysis of content and form in the narratives, I drew from Lieblich *et al* (1998), navigating between ‘categorical’ and ‘holistic’ approaches to content and form (Ibid), and refraining from privileging one approach over another. A wholly categorical approach would consist in dividing all the narratives into parts or individual words which the researcher then categorises. Whereas, a wholly holistic approach would analyse the narrative in its entirety, interpreting sections of the text in relation to other parts of the narrative.

Lieblich *et al* suggest a matrix of four ‘cells’ that serve as more subtle and enriched modes for analysing narratives, rather than taking exclusively one-sided holistic or categorical approaches,

HOLISTIC – CONTENT

HOLISTIC – FORM

CATEGORICAL – CONTENT

CATEGORICAL – FORM

(Ibid: 13)

In Lieblich *et al*, the ‘holistic-content’ mode of analysis focuses on the content of the story as a whole, and when separate sections of the story are analysed they are done so in relation to the content of the entire narrative. The ‘holistic-form’ mode however, looks at the plot or structure of the narrative, centring specifically on whether it is portrayed as a comedy, tragedy or satire for example. It also looks for ‘turning points’ that might help throw light on the overall development of the narrative.

Lieblich *et al* ‘s ‘categorical-content’ approach breaks the text into relatively small units of content, and subjects them to descriptive or statistical treatment. It looks at the particular themes that evolve in those units and gathers them into categories or groups. In this respect the categorical-content cell is most often associated with *content analysis*, the classical method for narrative research in the fields of psychology,

sociology, and education (Reissman: 1993). The ‘categorical-form’ mode on the other hand centres on particular stylistic or linguistic characteristics of defined units in the narrative which are gathered and quantified, the kind of metaphors the narrator uses or how frequent the passive or active voice is used for example. As such, the emphasis is considered to be on thought processes instead of contents.

The four analytic cells are useful tools for taking quite distinctive perspectives on narrative analysis, but as Liblich et al make clear

Each of the four modes of analysis is related to certain types of research questions, requires different types of texts, and is more appropriate for certain sample sizes.

(Lieblich et al: 1998: 14)

As my own research involved working with *small stories*, often fragmentary and unfinished stories (see chapter two, section 2.7), I chose to work with those cells that allowed for an analysis that did not treat narratives as finished texts (i.e. by excluding a holistic-form approach). My analysis alternated between holistic and categorical content as well as categorical form, depending on the specific type of narrative being analysed (i.e. narratives consisting of a few clauses, narratives co-constructed in a fragmentary manner by two or more participants, or extended narratives, often told by one participant, which were more rounded). I now describe how these modes of analysis were carried out.

Holistic-content

1. The narrative was listened to and read through several times until a pattern emerged, in the form of foci.
2. My initial overall impressions were written down, considering unusual features such as contradictions, unfinished descriptions, episodes or issues that seemed to disturb the narrator or produce disharmony.

3. The specific foci of contents or themes were outlined. Omissions of parts of the story or only brief references to a subject were taken to indicate a potential focal point.
4. The different themes were colour coded to aid easy identification.
5. Each theme was followed throughout the story and my conclusions noted, paying attention to where themes first appeared and ended, the transition between themes and the content of each one.
6. Themes identified in one narrative episode were looked for in other narrative episodes throughout the data, looking for patterns and potential consistencies beyond the individual episode.

(Adapted from Lieblich *et al*, 1998 : 62-63)

Categorical-content

1. Based on my research questions all the relevant parts of the narrative text were extracted to form a subtext.
2. *Definition of the content categories.* These were themes or perspectives that could be found across the subtext and which provided a means for classifying its units. They could be found in words, sentences, or groups of sentences. Analysis consisted in sifting through the subtext, identifying categories, subcategories and suggesting additional categories.
3. *Sorting the material into categories.* Here separate sentences and utterances were assigned to relevant categories. These may have been from a single narrative or from different narratives as the learners were interviewed on different occasions.
4. *Drawing conclusions from the results.* The contents from each category were used descriptively to formulate a picture of the content universe in certain groups. Hypothesis were made and tested at this stage.

(Adapted from Lieblich *et al*, 1998 : 112-114)

Categorical-form (analysis of emotional experience).

My approach to this form of analysis was to assess to what extent the narrative of a speaker was emotionally charged. Conclusions were drawn from the linguistic features of the story. The assumption was that events evoke emotions ‘..and their coping mechanisms are reflected in the linguistic features of their discourse’ (Ibid:155).

1. Any ‘difficult episodes’ were highlighted (e.g. painful learning events, tensions in the classroom, difficult relations with peers or teachers), attending to the actual occurrence of these rather than the participant’s own evaluation of them. Where relevant a detailed transcription was written including, length of silences, intonations, emphasis and so on. Here, I used a transcript approach based on Conversation Analysis (Sacks: 1995).
2. Any direct emotive appeals to me as the interviewer, for agreement or understanding were highlighted and any related rhetorical questions or comments (e.g. ‘what can you do against that’ or ‘you know what I mean’).
3. Notes on any of the following in the text were made:
 - a. Adverbials such as *suddenly* which could indicated how expected or unexpected an event was;
 - b. Mental verbs such as *I thought, I understood*, which could show to what extent an event was conscious and undergoing mental processing;
 - c. Denotations of time and place which may have been an attempt by the narrator to distance themselves from an event or bring it closer;
 - d. Past, present, or future forms of verbs and transitions between them, this might have indicated how the speaker identified with the events being related;
 - e. Transitions between first-person, second-person, and third-person were seen as potentially having been a sign of a split between the speaker’s self and the experiencing self due to difficulty in talking about an event again;
 - f. Passive and active forms of verbs which might have indicated the speaker’s perception of agency;

- g. Intensifiers such as *really* or *very*, and deintensifiers such as *maybe* or *like*, raising questions about how the magnitude of certain experiences could be considered consistent with the markers used;
- h. Breaking the causal and chronological progression of events, regressions, digressions, leaps in time, or silences may have been indicative of attempts to avoid relating certain ‘difficult episodes’ in part or wholly;
- i. Repetition of parts of the discourse (syllables, words, sentences, ideas) could have revealed how a subject experienced an emotional charge in relation to a particular episode or event;

(Adapted from Lieblich *et al*, 1998: 156-157)

After identifying the central themes and sub-themes that traversed the narratives (see chapter 4 for a summary of these and a description of the stage by stage analytical process), I selected those narratives that appeared to be addressing my research questions specifically, I then proceeded to analyse them through the lens of narrative positioning.

I now go on to describe the important methodological developments in the narrative positioning analytical approach (sections 3.8 – 3.8.2) and how they were eventually applied in my own research (section 3.8.3).

3.8 Narrative positioning analysis – Introduction.

Bamberg’s (1997) initial interest in how narratives provide a window onto human experience grew out of his reading of Labov and Waletzky’s approach (Labov, 1972, 1981; Labov & Waletzky, 1967), which he describes as being on two levels. The first more simplistic reading was to treat narratives as representations of past experiences and their meanings as being both in the past and in the ‘present’. The second, more indirect reading, sees narratives as representations that intervene between the actual

experience and the narrative. Bamberg describes these two approaches as being concerned with their points of departure and ultimate aims. The first approach focuses on what was said and how it was said, and then works towards why it was said. The second approach however focuses on how it was performed, centring on what narrative means as an act of instantiation to the teller and what they aim to achieve in the act of narrating.

Bamberg's interpretation of Labov & Waletzky's analytical approach saw their work as placing an emphasis on form over function, as it was concerned initially with the identification of sequential 'narrative clauses', corresponding to the sequence of narrative events, and then to 'free clauses' which were seen as giving insights into the narrator's evaluative stance. This approach Bamberg argued made the sequence of temporal events of the narrative an 'objective' basis on which to assess the more subjective criteria for an evaluative appraisal of their meaning. Bamberg's own stance was to adopt Labov and Waletzky's original approach but to place more emphasis on a functionalist orientation

... treating temporality as one among many other performance features that all ultimately are in the service of discursive purposes and the formations of local identities.

(Bamberg, 1997: 336)

Bamberg's concern with how narratives might give insights into 'the formations of local identities' led him to build a theory of narrative analysis based on Davies and Harré's 'positioning theory' (1990).

Although positioning theory was not developed specifically for narrative analysis Bamberg drew on Davies and Harré's definition (1990) of it as a discursive practice

...whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and intersubjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines

(Ibid: 48, cited in Bamberg, 1997: 336)

Bamberg's principal interest in positioning theory was its concern with how people positioned themselves in relation to one another in conversations thus producing one

another, as well as themselves, situationally as ‘social beings’. Bamberg’s *narrative positioning analysis* sought to bring positioning, which was principally concerned with how people attend to each other in interactional settings, together with Labov and Waletzky’s interest in what the language was referentially about, in essence the sequentially ordered events of narratives and their evaluations.

3.8.1 Historical development of narrative positioning analysis

Bamberg’s first formulation of narrative positioning analysis adopted three levels of analysis which were focused on analysing representations of agency, and how they emerged in the narrative event and interacted with the situated context of its telling (see chapter two, section 2.13):

1. How are characters positioned in relation to one another within reported events?
2. How does the speaker position him-or herself to the audience?
3. How do narrators position themselves to themselves?

(Bamberg, 1997: 337)

Level one was concerned with analysing characters within the narrative event and their depiction as protagonists and antagonists, or perpetrators and victims. The principle focus was on the linguistic means of marking their agency, for example

‘(a) the agent who is in control while the action is inflicted on the other; or (b) as the central character who is helplessly at the mercy of outside (quasi “natural”) forces or who is rewarded by luck, fate, or personal qualities (such as bravery, nobility, or simply “character”)

(Ibid: 337)

Level two sought ‘to analyse the linguistic means that are characteristic for the particular discourse mode ... being employed’ (Ibid). Its main concern was identifying whether the narrator attempted to make excuses for his/her actions and attribute blame to others.

Finally, level three looked at how the language was employed to make claims about what the narrator held to be true beyond the conversational situation. This maintained that the linguistic devices employed were more than about content and the interlocutor. Bamberg maintained that

(i)n constructing the content and one's audience in terms of role participants, the narrator transcends the question of: "How do I want to be understood by you, the audience?" and constructs a (local) answer to the question: "Who am I?"

(Ibid)

Bamberg however clarified this answer to the question 'who am I?' as being localised to the context of its telling, and thus a project of limited range.

In sum, Bamberg related his use of positioning analysis to a broader interpretation of narrative from Labov & Waletzky's, where

the discursive situation and the discursive purpose are as central as the semantic (temporal) organisation of the narrative. In this sense, the analysis of positioning is an attempt to unite the pragmatics of narrating with the linguistic (structural) analysis...

(Ibid:341)

3.8.2 Identity in narrative positioning analysis

In their joint paper, Bamberg & Georgakopoulou (2008) developed narrative positioning analysis from their own individual work in relation to 'small story' analysis (Bamberg, 1997, 2004; Georgakopoulou 2000), to look at questions of *identity work*.

Bamberg & Georgakopoulou define their work as being

(i)n line with a general shift toward narratives as tools of interpretation (De Fina et al. 2006), we are interested in the social actions/functions that narratives perform in the lives of people: how people actually use stories in everyday, mundane situations in order to create (and perpetuate) a sense of who they are.

Bamberg & Georgakopoulou's model of positioning affords the possibility of viewing identity constructions as two-fold, analysing how the referential world is constructed with characters in space and time, and how it functions in relation to interactive engagement. In this sense, 'how the referential world is constructed points to how the teller wants to be understood, what sense of self they index' (Ibid: 380).

In their analysis, Bamberg & Georgakopoulou adopted three levels of (interrelated) positioning:

- 1) how characters are positioned within the story
- 2) how the speaker/narrator positions himself
(and is positioned) within the interactive situation
- 3) how the speaker/narrator positions a sense of self/identity with regard to
dominant discourses or master narratives

Point three in Bamberg & Georgakopoulou's positioning analysis differed from Bamberg's original (How do narrators position themselves to themselves?) in that it sought to draw the local into the wider arena of socio-cultural influences on representations of the self.

Bamberg & Georgakopoulou's *conclusions* in their research were that their participants' narratives were notable for their 'inconsistencies, contradictions (and) moments of trouble and tension' (Ibid: 392) as they navigated 'different versions of selfhood in local contexts' (Ibid). The relation between dominant Discourses and master narratives, and these 'local contexts' with their small stories, contrasted with 'long-standing privileging of coherence by narrative approaches' (Ibid). Small story analysis through the lens of narrative positioning analysis sought therefore to legitimise contradictory and competing positions as a central, hitherto neglected dimension of identity work through narrative.

In Bamberg & Georgakopoulou's research, *identity* was taken as a social positioning of self and other. As previously stated (Chapter 2, section 2.9.2) this concept of identity draws on a social-constructivist approach to identity (Benwell & Stokes, 2006; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; De Fina, Schiffrin & Bamberg, 2008) where identities are not envisaged as possessions (which individuals own) but rather as fluid constructions in talk-in-interaction, being complex, multiple, at times contradictory, and hybrid (Blackledge & Creese, 2009; Weldon, 2004). Social-constructivist orientations pay close attention to situated examples of language in use and the study of how they are interactively displayed.

3.8.3 How Narrative Positioning analysis is applied in the research

Drawing on Bamberg & Georgakopoulou (Bamberg, 1997; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008) and De Fina's recent work (2013), I adopted narrative positioning analysis to gain specific insights into how my participants used narratives to position themselves in relation to Discourses relating to their student-interpreter identities and the projected identity of the professional interpreter, in the context of the institution (see chapters 5-8 for an analysis of these Discourses).

In my methodological approach I drew from Bamberg and Georgakopoulou's three level analysis as well as De Fina's extended work (2013), to constitute my own levels (albeit closely related). These levels are firstly broadly defined and then explained in greater detail (drawing from De Fina, 2013).

Level 1: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

- a. Where is the narrative situated and how does it develop?
- b. How are the characters portrayed and relationally positioned?

Level 2: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

- a. How was the narrative occasioned in the surrounding talk and why was it told?
- b. How do the participants position themselves in the interactive telling and how does the narrative develop in that interaction?

Level 3: Connecting levels one and two to Discourses

- a. How do levels one and two relate to individual stances towards Discourses?
- b. How are these stances common to other positioning across the whole data, which might suggest collective positioning processes in relation to certain Discourses?

Level one focuses on the narrative event, principally on the setting, developing action and the characters portrayed, analysing in particular: the types of actions attributed to the protagonists; the motives attributed to the protagonists for these actions; and the characteristics attributed to the protagonists and other narrative figures.

Level two focuses on the narrative-telling event. Firstly it looks at how the narrative is embedded in the surrounding talk, how the narrative was occasioned and with what objectives? It then looks at how the interlocutors align themselves in the actual narration: how they co-construct the narrative, challenging and/or ratifying the others' telling by (re)positioning the characters, as well as how they use reported speech (when introduced) in support of this positioning.

In both level one and two analyses, careful attention is paid to how the characters in the narrative event and their narrators in the narrative-telling event deploy indexicals to position themselves and others in relation to the social world and thereby claim or assign certain social identities (see section 2.13.1). Attention was paid here to how '... phonological and morphological structures are widely used to key speakers' social

status, role, affect, and epistemological perspective' (Ochs, 1990: 292) as well as how structures such as repetition, reformulation and code-switching can 'index local contextual dimensions' (Ibid). Moreover, specific attention was given to how characters were voiced in the narrative-telling event, both lexically and prosodically, which can show how the narrators index some social position by aligning the characters with a particular social group (Wortham, 2001).

Level three brings levels one and two together in relation to how the participants' position themselves in relation to wider Discourses. The relevancies of these Discourses are highlighted by looking for patterns in other narratives in the data, and in ethnographic data outside the interview, to introduce a discussion about the wider implications of these narratives beyond their local context. This is the level then in which the social identity of the individual is identifiable (beyond the localised positioning of indexicality), the point where the question 'who am I?' is answered (Georgakopoulou, 2013).

3.9 Concerns with interviewing in qualitative research- Introduction

In the following sections I look at some general methodological concerns in interviewing through a post-modernist perspective (section 3.9.1), technical aspects of data collection from an ethnographic perspective and the role of reflexivity (section 3.9.2), and the consequent practical issues of managing an interview (section 3.9.3).

3.9.1 Methodological concerns in interviewing from a post-modernist perspective.

A difficulty in narrative research (as in qualitative research in general) is that it

...differs significantly from its positivistic counterpart in its underlying assumptions that there is neither a single, absolute truth in human reality nor one correct reading or interpretation of a text....

(Lieblich *et al*, 1998: 2)

From a more philosophic perspective the whole process of trying to understand our existence is temporally and spatially complicated,

It is perfectly true, as philosophers say, that life must be understood backwards. But they forget the other proposition that it must be lived forwards. And if one thinks over that proposition it becomes more and more evident that life can never really be understood in time simply because at no particular moment can I find the necessary resting place from which to understand it—backwards.

(Brockmeier, 2000: 51-52, summarizing Kierkegaard)

The same can be said of the narrator in the act of telling their narrative, as of Kierkegaard's philosopher. He/she must contend with the problem that 'subjects do not hold still for their portraits' (Clifford, 1986), even if they are seemingly self-portraits. Indeed, as an individual is telling the narrative of their experiences they are also changing it by the very fact of the different *where*, *when*, *why* and *with whom* of its telling, giving rise to new interpretations even as one recounts it (Atkinson, 1990). Prior (2011) shows how the active representation of the self can vary even in the *same* narrative when told at different times in a life. Through second language interviews with an immigrant to Canada he shows how the same narrative can serve different purposes at different times in relation to rationality, morality and truth in its collaborative construction with the interviewer.

That interviews are collaborative constructions highlights how the researcher (the 'to whom') must also contend with his/her active participation in the form that narratives take (Mishler, 1991; Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). One of the most salient differences from a positivist approach to interviewing (see chapter two, section 2.5, for a definition of positivism), is the recasting of the researcher as an active agent in the interview process. Miller (2011), in her fine-grained analysis of three interviews with a Chinese-born immigrant to America, shows how the interviewer can project an 'imagined subject' on the interviewee and contribute to producing certain

interpretations of their accounts, (in this case, of discrimination). I return to the subject of the active role played by the interviewer in section 3.9.2.

Moreover, researchers need to be sensitised to how they present narratives in their *finished* form (i.e. the printed version in a thesis). What we as researchers see might be akin to a photograph, a snapshot in a particular period of time, but how we chose to portray that image is dependent on the lenses, angles, film, and the developmental processes of the darkroom we use (Mishler, 1991). The decisions about the way we transcribe narratives are theory driven (Ochs, 1979; Swann, 2010) and located in Discourses (i.e. feminist, post-colonialist, and so on), as are our readings of the data collated and analysed.

Meaning is always ambiguous, arising out of a process of interaction among people: the narrator, the listener, the analyst, and the reader of what is produced. Consequently, a narrative is not meant to be interpreted as a true objective account of someone's life, an account of the facts (Reissman, 1993), it is rather more a 'cubist portrait' (my words) which presents many reflected and refracted angles of perspective on a subject and consequently the portrayer of that subject. The researcher therefore is not aiming to produce a 'true' representation (see chapter two, section 2.17.1, for my ethnographic approach to 'subtle realism'), but rather one that can be deemed 'trustworthy' (Atkinson, 1990: 134), by placing him/herself in the picture as well.

The above mentioned concerns about the interviewing process are related to a post-modernist perspective, which in its strongest form questions any overarching concept of *reality* (a monolithic structure), directing us instead to see society as fragmented elements in a continuous flux. Post-modernism would have us look at these fragmented everyday events in their own right rather than try to patch them together into some paradigmatic whole (Silverman, 1993, 2004). In this research, although I agree with many of the conceptual positions that underpin a post-modernist perspective, I align myself with Hammersley (1992) in arguing that 'we can maintain a belief in the existence of phenomena independent of our claims about them' (Ibid: 50) and join with Foley (2002) in being a little bit *realist* and a little bit *post-structuralist*

(see section 2.17.1), part of a ‘new tortured reflection... cobbl(ing) together allegedly contradictory perspectives (Ibid: 486).

3.9.2 An ethnographic approach to interviewing: The researcher and *reflexivity*

One of the central tenets of an ethnographic approach to interviewing is allowing the subject to talk about *their* world in *their* terms.

If I were to try and put my finger on the single most serious shortcoming relating to the use of interviews in the social sciences, it would certainly be the commonsensical, unreflective manner in which most analyses of interview data are collected.

(Briggs, 1986: 102)

From this ethnographic perspective, Briggs sensitizes researchers to the dangers of ‘communicative hegemony’ (Ibid), where they may impose their own discourse on the participant and produce hidden filters that limit our ability to hear. In the interview the researcher may use words or terms that the participant did not say, for example, the researcher might ask for clarification when a participant is talking about the reasons for learning a language by asking the question ‘why do you want to invest in this language?’ If the participant has not uttered the word ‘invest’ the researcher may be introducing a concept that changes the participant’s perspective; he/she may view the interviewer as wanting to know about future jobs, their financial incentives to learn, and so on.

Furthermore, the researcher should always be aware of the social dynamics of the interview (dominant and subordinate power relations between everyone involved, as well as the researcher’s own personal politics which may come into play consciously or unconsciously, see chapter one, section 1.6.2). From a Foucauldian perspective (Foucault, 1976) ‘discourses’ of difference are at the centre of structures of inequality, they produce them but they can also resist them as well. When interviewing a particular *group* we might also be contributing to establishing it as a *group*, as

something *other* and *different*, which can be managed and controlled. In this sense, by trying to tackle inequality, researchers can actually be contributing to it by giving only certain voices and representations to the objects they are researching.

The effect of positivism (see section 2.5) on the social sciences (and one which is still felt today) has been an attempt to divorce the researcher from the researched in order to collect *uncontaminated* data. This presumes that it is possible for a researcher to be a neutral vessel of cultural experience, however it fails to acknowledge that all researchers are social beings and are thus part of the social world they study. From this perspective one cannot deny that we rely on our socio-culturally given *common sense* knowledge of *our* world when we come into contact with *other* socio-cultural worlds, and that we cannot help affecting and being affected by that contact. In essence, we cannot step outside the social world in order to study it.

Reflexivity is the continuous attempt on the part of researchers to monitor what they bring to their field of study and how they interact with what they find there. It is based on the recognition that researchers' orientations are shaped by their socio-cultural background and ideologies, among other things. Reflexivity refutes the image of researchers as inhabitants of some autonomous realm, but rather as people who are firmly situated in their social world. They are affected by social processes, personal characteristics, and their own particular biographies, as well as the very academic field they inhabit and the way it regulates what is and is not relevant to research (Bourdieu, 1992).

Even though a researcher's data is constructed under such complex conditions, Hammersley argues (1993) that this does not mean that their findings automatically imply that they are not representative of social phenomena. To do so would imply that

... the only true form of representation would involve the world imprinting its characteristics on our senses, a highly implausible account of the process of perception...

(Ibid: 18)

Reflexivity requires us to recognise that research is an active process

... in which accounts of the world are produced through selective observation and theoretical interpretation of what is seen, through asking particular questions, and interpreting what is said in reply..

(Ibid)

Hammersely suggests that we reject a standardization of the social character of research, to avoid trying to become a 'fly on the wall' or a 'full participant', as though we had stepped completely into the realm under observation instead of always having one foot in the realm where we began (see chapter two, section 2.15, on emic and etic perspectives).

Reflexivity is much more than an ethnographic tool, however it is an integral part of how all human beings interpret life experiences, part of how they acquire knowledge about the self in relation to society. In this sense we are all ethnographers (Hymes, 1964a).

G.H Mead (1962), drawing from semiotics (the science of signs, principally linguistic), posits the existence of a personal 'I' and a social 'me', where the former is in continual dialogue with the latter in a process of detachment and evaluation. Drawing on Mead's theory Ryan (1977) says 'in order to know itself at all, to constitute itself as an object for itself, the self must be absent from itself, outside itself' (Ryan, 1977: 697. Cited in Babcock, 1980: 1). It is in this 'mirror-like' state then that the individual is 'conscious of being self-conscious of himself as an other' (Babcock, 1980: 1). 'Reflexiveness' for Mead, in Babcock's view, is the ability of the individual to turn back his/her experience upon him/herself and

(b)y virtue of this reflexive capacity (he/she) is able to understand and adjust to the social process, to modify his (her) future behaviour, and to modify the social process itself.

(Ibid: 2)

Returning to reflexivity as an ethnographic tool, Foley (2002) advocates a reflexivity that 'holds dichotomies like science-humanities/art in a useful tension.' (Ibid: 486),

attempting to use autobiographical experiences, ‘ordinary’ language, metaphor, irony and satire as well as the rather more ‘flat, colorless, denotative language of science’ (Ibid: 487). Foley tacks between post-structuralist and scientific realist perspectives, not being entirely convinced by one or the other.

Drawing from Foley (and Hammersley), I too took a similar position in my emic-centred research, a position that rejects the ‘god-trick’ (Haraway, 1988) of attempting to abstract oneself from ones subjects, and which requires researchers instead to

...speak as mere mortals from various historical, culture-bound standpoints; (as) we must still make limited, historically situated knowledge claims.

(Foley, 2002: 487)

3.9.3 The interview guide: Organising the interview space and framing interview questions

A central aspect of an ethnographic perspective on interviewing is the orientation towards more open and less structured interviews. In structured interviews the researcher has an interview schedule with set questions, often in a set order. This does not mean that the ethnographic interview is completely unstructured however, where ‘anything goes’. Rather, the ethnographic interviewer’s questions are shaped by the topics that the interviewee brings up and with the language the interviewee uses to express them (see section 3.10.2). Moreover, whereas an initial interview may be far ranging, subsequent interviews with the same participant will be more focused on those issues that emerged previously.

My overall orientation as an interviewer was based principally on Spradely’s ‘The Ethnographic Interview’ (1979), (although Wengraf’s narrative approach (2001) makes similar points). In the interview I attempted to ‘start from ignorance’, resisting as much as possible the temptation to appear knowledgeable, and to carry out the interview with as few assumptions as possible about the participants and on how they saw their lives. This of course is a very difficult task, particularly in situations where

the interviewee is aware of shared knowledge with the interviewer, but it served as a general orientating approach. I also attempted to start without hypotheses, taking the position that the interviewer should not go into an interview with a clear idea of what they expect to get out of it. This entailed avoiding bringing a set of pre-prepared questions that I wanted answers to (see above), again, a complex and difficult thing to do given my role in the institution and my knowledge and experience in the field (see chapter 1, section 1.6.1). It was my aim to encourage the participant to describe and narrate rather than evaluate, i.e. avoiding as much as possible questions like ‘what do you think of..?’ or ‘what’s your opinion of..?’ and to attempt to learn by building up a picture from the participants’ own language, trying to avoid introducing language that is not their own (see section 3.9.2). Also, I intended to limit my questions as much as possible. This is a major part of an ethnographic approach to interviewing, allowing the participant to speak and develop their own thoughts and ideas as much as possible (Ibid).

The following represents my interview guide, outlining the seating arrangements (with relative reasoning for the choices made), as well as the nature of the questions asked with regard to the underlining objectives.

Group interviews were organized to create a comfortable atmosphere conducive to discussion, by arranging seating in a circle without a central table (see figure 1, below).

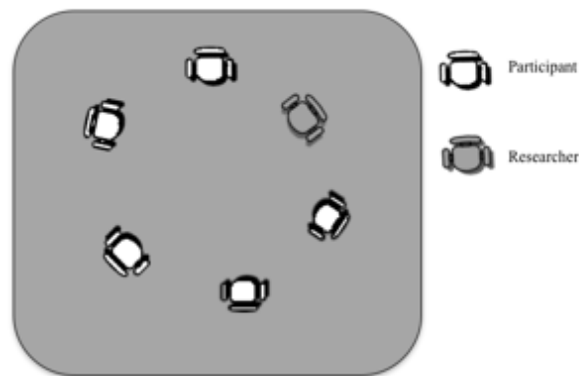
... circular seating enables all group members to face each other, which is crucial for establishing the interactive group dynamics that are central to a focus group discussion. Vaughn et al (1996) state that group members are most likely to communicate with those seated directly across from them... If participants are seated as in a classroom set-up with all the group members facing forwards, then there is an expectation for the moderator to provide information to the group rather than for participants to interact in a discussion.

(Hennink, 2007: 162)

Individual one-to-one interviews were similarly conducted with out a central table and seats positioned at a small, obtuse angle to create a neutral focal space, to avoid a potentially confrontational dynamic, which might have suggested an interrogation rather than a conversation (see figure 2).

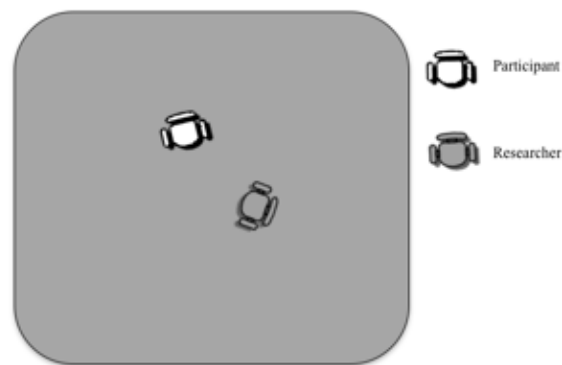
As chairs were equipped with a fold-away table the recording device was always placed on my own table³⁰.

Figure 1. Layout of interview room for group interviews.



³⁰ This was an Apple ipad, with cover, which was placed under a book so as not to attract too much attention from the participants.

Figure 2. Layout of interview room for one-to-one interview.



In the first session of one-to-one interviews, the following statement (derived from Lieblich et al, 1998) was read to all participants before starting the interview:

People sometimes see their lives as books. I would like you to think about your life now as if you were writing a book about it with regard to language learning. Think about the chapters in this book and their relevancy for you.

(Ibid: 25)

This statement was intended to stimulate the participants to take a narrative approach in relating their experiences (as suggested by Lieblich et al, Ibid). It also aimed to stimulate the students to recount their lives prior to entering the institution, and to contextualise this new stage in their educational lives in relation to the past. However, apart from an initial elicitation concerning their choice of ‘chapters’, I refrained from any further mention of their lives in relation to ‘books’ unless they reintroduced the metaphor themselves.

Apart from this initial framing of the first one-to-one interviews, I aimed at allowing the interviews to be driven by the participants' own direction of thoughts without overtly influencing them, an ethnographic approach. This approach was maintained throughout all the subsequent interviews, which began with a broad request to recount their experiences in the institution. Again, in line with ethnographic methods, salient themes that had emerged in the first session of interviews were actively re-introduced in the second session to elicit further comments and thoughts.

In the following table (Table 7), I present my principal aims and strategies (drawing from Whyte, 1984) with regard to how I conducted the interviews.

Table 7. Interview conduct

AIM	Inviting and encouraging the participant to continue their line of thought.	Eliciting reflection on something said by the participant.	Probing a specific remark as it emerges in the interview.	Probing an idea as it emerges in the interview.	Probing an earlier idea, in the same interview or in another interview.
ACTION	Back channeling using words, phrases and sounds, such as 'hmm', 'I see', 'right', 'that's interesting', as well as gestures, such as a nod of the head.	Repeating the participants' words with a rising intonation, suggesting a question and/or asking directly for clarification.	Probing the participant's last remark but the interviewer does not just repeat back the participant's words but actively asks a question for clarification.	Probing an idea or topic raised or suggested either by the participant or the interviewer, to develop other relevancies.	This might be introducing an idea or topic raised earlier, either by the participant or the interviewer.
EXAMPLES FROM DATA	<p><i>Matteo:</i> I will be able to get into the laurea magistrale ((specialization post-grad degree))</p> <p><i>Alan:</i> right</p> <p><i>Matteo:</i> yeah</p> <p><i>Alan:</i> hmm</p> <p><i>Matteo:</i> but I have to improve a lot</p>	<p><i>Alan:</i> you said that yo- you 'want to help Italy?' Did I understand correctly?</p>	<p><i>Maria:</i> because there was this confliction between them (..) these conflicts between them</p> <p><i>Alan:</i> can can you give me an example of (.)</p>	<p><i>Matteo:</i> I just take the the good things out of it (.)</p> <p><i>Alan:</i> hmm (.) but there a:re <u>negative</u> things then.</p>	<p><i>Alan:</i> right and you talked last time you talked a lot about this sort of <u>competitive</u> nature of the classroom (.) how did that occur this this term?</p>

	cos er::m (.)		that?		
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3.10 Conclusions

My methodological framework sought to explore my participants’ trajectories towards becoming expert professional interpreters by attempting to explore their narratives in the context of the wider socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-educational ideologies and discourses present in their chosen field.

Taking an ethnographic approach the data was continually interpreted and re-interpreted, informing each stage of my research. For example my initial interpretations of the research data guided my focus in the subsequent workshops and also guided my interests in the other interviews. Thus, the research methodology was never static and prescriptive, but complex and cyclical in its building of meaning and its sensitivity to developments along the research trajectory.

In the following chapter I identify central themes running through the data and in the subsequent chapters (chapters 5,6 and 7) I present my data and analysis, (applying the methodology expounded in this chapter) and the interpretive conclusions I drew from it.

Chapter Four

Thematic codification of the research data

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I outline how I carried out my analysis of the data, describing how I arrived at the central themes that I identified in my research, and the broader categories I developed to encapsulate them.

Initially, I listened repeatedly to all the recordings of my interviews, together with the transcripts of those recordings, to identify all the narrative episodes that emerged (see section 2.4 for a definition of a narrative episode, and section 3.6 for a general quantitative summary). The length of narratives varied from a few clauses (i.e. a vignette), to more extended forms (i.e. describing an experience(s) in detail). When narratives were more extended, I applied a holistic-content analysis (see section 3.7), examining the foci of the contents and themes, and colour coding the latter. I then looked for patterns and potential consistencies beyond the individual episode throughout the data (in all the narrative episodes), paying attention to where themes first appeared and ended, the transition between themes and the content of each one. At this stage of the analysis I was not focusing specifically on answering my initial research questions but rather attempting to obtain a general overview of my participants' accounts of their experiences, and possibly considering variations on my original questions. In conjunction with this analysis, I also examined my field notes (see appendix B), to see if I could find episodes of encounters with my participants which might have some bearing on the themes I had identified in the interview data, or themes that had not emerged in that data but seemed salient.

In my second stage of analysis, I turned specifically to my research questions (which remained the same as initially posited, see chapter one, section 1.2), applying a

categorical-content analysis (see section 3.7), sifting through the content and themes that had emerged initially, for data that appeared to conform to a *subtext* (ibid) related to the following:

- the identity of the professional interpreter
- the resources required to become a professional interpreter
- student experiences in the institution (i.e. with peers and institutional representatives, such as teachers).

I then attempted to define the content categories, drawing on those themes that appeared specifically related to the subtext.

In selecting the themes that were particularly relevant to my research questions, I also took into consideration the emotive content in the narrative episodes from which they emerged, suggesting a greater degree of engagement and potential significance to my participants. In this analysis I applied a categorical-form analysis (see section 3.7), focusing on emotive language to explore them in greater depth.

4.2 Main themes in the data - Introduction

The main themes and sub-themes that emerged from my narrative analysis and my analysis of my field notes, were the following:

- the interpreter is a language expert;
- only students who speak like native-speakers can become interpreters;
 - there is not enough time to become like native-speakers in the three-year degree;
 - to become like native speakers, students need to live abroad for long periods of time;
- Sslmit students are the best language students because they are in the best institution in Italy;

- Sslmit students are always under pressure to study more
- Sslmit students study all the time and have no time to relax;
- Sslmit students are highly competitive in the classroom, more than any other students in any other institution;
 - competitiveness helps improve language learning;
 - competitiveness creates a bad working environment in the classroom;
 - competitiveness prepares students for their future careers;
- the relation between teachers and students in Sslmit is very different from other Italian higher education institutions.
 - teachers have too much power over students
 - teachers do not respect student's rights
 - teachers do not treat students as mature students
 - teachers are sometimes unprofessional

Considering the contexts in which these themes emerged, I identified four main categories of talk, where all the themes emerged:

- teacher talk about the professional interpreter
- talk about language learning
- talk about the character of the interpreter-student in the institution
- talk about teacher-student relations

In the following sections I give an overview of each category and how I began to perceive them in my initial analysis as being relevant to some of the major themes I identified.

4.2.1 Teacher talk about the professional interpreter

Teacher talk about professional interpreters emerged quite frequently in the first group interview when Matteo initiated a narrative about a teacher telling the class that interpreters required 'talent' in order to become professionals, and that the life of the

interpreter was one dominated by ‘stress’. Matteo’s comments on this episode displayed an uneasiness about the concept of ‘talent’ in particular, which was taken up by the other participants for an extended stretch of dialogue. This narrative then sensitised me to the relevance that my participants appeared to be giving to teacher talk about the resources required to become a professional interpreter and the projected identity of that professional figure.

My second session of interviews saw more narrative episodes about teacher talk in relation to this, and the potential influence that this talk was having on my participants’ own projected identities as possible future interpreters. In some cases this teacher talk was taken as inspirational (i.e. in Maria’s narratives, see chapter 5) but in others it appeared to have the opposite effect, apparently making some participants question any possibility of acquiring the identity of a professional interpreter and even provoking declarative statements that they no longer wished to be interpreters (i.e. Rosa and Silvia, chapter 5).

4.2.2 Talk about language learning

In the first group interview *talk about language learning* emerged quite frequently through narratives related to my participants’ concerns about not attaining an ‘interpreter level’ (a participant’s term, see chapter 6) of linguistic competency by their third year (the end of the degree programme). The emphasis in these narratives appeared to be on the need for elevated linguistic ability (sometimes expressed as being ‘perfect’ in a language, see chapter 6 again) as an essential resource for becoming professional interpreters, and a general concern that this was an ever-diminishing prospect in relation to the time available in the three-year degree.

The second session of interviews presented some narratives about participants reconciling themselves to lower linguistic competencies and in some cases a change in focus to other sets of resources (i.e. cultural knowledge) however, the majority of participants still maintained that a high ‘native speaker’ like level was essential and appeared disheartened by the difficulty (or seeming impossibility) of its attainment (i.e. Rosa, see chapter 6).

4.2.3 Talk about the character of the interpreter-student in the institution

In my first one-to-one interview with Rosa, she introduced a narrative about coming from another faculty to Sslmit (see section 3.3.1 for a brief biography) and realising that all the students were ‘nerds’, positioning Sslmit students as always studying, with little to no time for ‘fun’. In her second one-to-one interview Rosa introduced another narrative about how she too had become a ‘nerd’, and relating this to the institution, ‘it’s Sslmit so: I was expecting that’ (see chapter 7 for an in depth analysis). These narratives sensitized me to other narratives that were related to the projected, collective identity of the Sslmit student in the context of the institution. Other narratives positioned the institution as requiring it’s students to be the ‘best’ which seemed to be strongly connected to the participants’ construction of the ‘typical Sslmit student’ as always having to study to meet high status goals of performance.

The nature of competitiveness among the students also emerged when talking about *Sslmit students*. This emerged quite unexpectedly for me in the first one-to-one and group interviews where participants initiated narratives about experiences of competitiveness among their peers in the classroom. These narratives emerged after general questions from me about the ‘atmosphere’ in the class or broadly framed requests for their experiences in the class in the first term. As a teacher and tutor I was perhaps focused more on teaching and learning practices going into the research (see chapter one, section 1.6.2), and how they might be perceived by my participants. However, it was a surprise for me to hear narratives of rivalry and competition among the students, and the effect this had upon their experience both in and outside the classroom. The relevance of this inter-student competitiveness as a form of resource became a central focus for the participants in the first group interview, being described diversely as a good thing, when linked to improving linguistic competency (spurring students to learn more by wanting to perform better in the class in front of their fellow peers and the teacher), and preparing students for the competition of the work place, but it was also seen as being negative by some, in causing rivalries and resentment among the student population and a general ‘bad atmosphere’.

Competitiveness in relation to the institution was also flagged as being ‘normal’ or to be expected considering the ‘nature’ of the type of student who wished to study there and the high demands of the institution itself.

The second session of interviews presented narratives showing shifts in positioning by my participants though, in some cases elevating the negative aspect but in others seeing it as diminishing due to increased friendship networks and the demands of actual interpreting studies (beginning in the second term only) which were variously described as requiring more collaboration among the students.

4.2.4 Talk about teacher-student relations in the institution

Quantitatively, narratives about teacher-student relations were very elevated across the data (see section 4.3 below).

My participants made many references to the smaller teacher-student ratio in Sslmit in comparison with other Italian higher education institutions, which in interviews in the first session were portrayed as being positive for better teacher-student relations (creating a greater sense of community), as well as an improved potential for learning more.

Narrative episodes in the final group interview were predominantly concerned with questions of professionalism and unprofessionalism, as well as issues of maturity and immaturity in how teachers positioned the participants as adult learners or not (see chapter eight), allowing them autonomy in their studies, or adopting paternal-like rigour in checking their progress at every stage.

In the following section I give a brief quantitative overview of the instances of narrative episodes related to these broad categories and their related themes.

4.3 Summary of quantitative data

1. Teacher talk about the professional interpreter.

Session one interviews

Table 8. Number of narrative episodes in first session of data and duration of episodes: Teacher talk about the professional interpreter.

Participants	Narrative episodes relevant to teacher talk about the professional interpreter	Time of narrative(s) (Hours/minutes/seconds)
Federico	-	-
Maria	-	-
Matteo	-	-
Rosa	-	-
Silvia	-	-
Group interview	2	00:05:00

Session two interviews

Table 9. Number of narrative episodes in second session of data and duration of episodes: Teacher talk about the professional interpreter.

Participants	Narrative episodes relevant to teacher talk about the professional interpreter	Time of narrative (Hours/minutes/seconds)
Federico	-	-
Maria	2	00:02:55
Matteo	2	00:04:21
Rosa	2	00:03:08
Silvia	1	00:00:40
Group interview	2	00:05:35

General summary across all data

*Table 10. General summary of narrative episodes in all data and duration of episodes:
Teacher talk about the professional interpreter*

Total number of narrative episodes	11
Total time	00:21:39

2. Talk about language learning

Session one interviews

Table 11. Number of narrative episodes in first session of data and duration of episodes: Talk about language learning.

Participants	Narrative episodes relevant to talk about language learning	Time of narrative(s) (Hours/minutes/seconds)
Federico	-	-
Maria	-	-
Matteo	-	-
Rosa	1	00:00:32
Silvia	-	-
Group interview	14	00:15:22

Session two interviews

Table 12. Number of narrative episodes in second session of data and duration of episodes: Talk about language learning.

Participants	Narrative episodes relevant to talk about language learning	Time of narrative(s) (Hours/minutes/seconds)
Federico	-	-
Maria	4	00:03:09
Matteo	4	00:04:49
Rosa	8	00:06:01
Silvia	2	00:01:44
Group interview	1	00:01:11

General summary across all data:

*Table 13. General summary of narrative episodes in all data and duration of episodes:
Talk about language learning.*

Total number of narrative episodes	33
Total time	00:31:17

3. The Sslmit student

Session one interviews related specifically to the sub-themes:

- All study and no time to relax.
- Institutional pressure to be the best.

Table 14. Number of narrative episodes in first session of data and duration of episodes: Talk about study and pressure to be the best.

Participants	Narrative episodes relevant to participants' representations of the typical Sslmit student, related to issues of study and pressure to be the best	Time of narrative(s) (Hours/minutes/seconds)

Federico	1	00:00:53
Maria	1	00:00:50
Matteo	3	00:01:19
Rosa	1	00:01:17
Silvia	3	00:02:30
Group interview	8	00:05:08

Session two interviews related specifically to the sub-themes:

- All study and no time to relax.
- Institutional pressure to be the best.

Table 15. Number of narrative episodes in second session of data and duration of episodes: Talk about study and pressure to be the best.

Participants	Narrative episodes relevant to participants' representations of the typical Sslmit student, related to issues of study and pressure to be the best	Time of narrative(s) (Hours/minutes/seconds)
Federico	-	-
Maria	-	-
Matteo	2	00:01:33
Rosa	3	00:01:49
Silvia	3	00:02:43
Group interview	1	00:00:22

Session one interviews specifically related to the sub-theme of competitiveness among students.

Table 16. Number of narrative episodes in first session of data and duration of episodes: Talk about student competitiveness.

Participants	Narrative episodes relevant to talk about student competitiveness	Time of narrative(s) (Hours/minutes/seconds)
Federico	4	00:05:37
Maria	-	-
Matteo	4	00:03:41
Rosa	-	-
Silvia	9	00:05:44
Group interview	9	00:07:28

Session two interviews specifically related to the sub-theme of competition

Table 17. Number of narrative episodes in second session of data and duration of episodes: Talk about student competitiveness.

Participants	Narrative episodes relevant to talk about student competitiveness	Time of narrative(s) (Hours/minutes/seconds)
Federico	1	00:01:00
Maria	5	00:04:17
Matteo	4	00:09:46
Rosa	2	00:01:12
Silvia	4	00:02:03
Group interview	-	-

General summary across all data:

Table 18. General summary of narrative episodes in all data and duration of episodes: Student talk about study, pressure to be the best, and competitiveness.

Total number of narrative episodes	65
Total time	00:58:29

4. Talk about Teacher-student relations in the institution.

Session one interviews

Table 19. Number of narrative episodes in first session of data and duration of episodes: Talk about teacher – Student relations.

Participants	Narrative episodes relevant to teacher-student relations	Time of narrative(s) (Hours/minutes/seconds)
Federico	-	-
Maria	-	-
Matteo	1	00:02:13
Rosa	1	00:00:29
Silvia	1	00:00:31
Group interview	10	00:14:07

Session 2 interviews

Table 20. Number of narrative episodes in second session of data and duration of episodes: Talk about Teacher – Student relations.

Participants	Narrative episodes relevant to teacher-student relations	Time of narrative(s) (Hours/minutes/seconds)
Federico	11	00:18:46
Maria	5	00:10:34
Matteo	4	00:05:27
Rosa	-	-
Silvia	-	-
Group interview	18	00:26:18

General summary across all data:

*Table 21. General summary of narrative episodes in all data and duration of episodes:
Talk about teacher-Student relations.*

Total number of narrative episodes	43
Total time	01:11:21

In the following chapters (5- 8) I analysis narratives from each category identified in this chapter, using narrative positioning analysis to draw connections between local narrative episodes and wider Discourses relevant to my participants' construction of their own identities as students in the institution and the identity of the professional interpreter.

Chapter Five

Data analysis

5.1 The salience of teacher talk- Introduction

In the following chapter I look at how teacher talk was related to Discourses that affected my participants' constructions of the identity of a professional interpreter, and the resources necessary to become one. The participants' narratives provide insights into how they positioned themselves and others in relation to these Discourses, through their depiction of scenes, characters and reported speech in the *narrative event* (the narrative told) as well as in their positioning of themselves and others in the *narrative-telling event* itself (the moment of the narrative's telling), affirming, ratifying or contesting that positioning. This positioning shows how they evaluated the identity and resources proposed by those Discourses present in their teachers' talk and the effect those Discourses appeared to have on their student identities and their projected identities as potential professionals in the field.

5.2 Narrative on interpreting as stress and talent

I begin with a narrative episode that emerged in the first group interview, where Matteo introduces the figure of Moscato, a teacher of interpreting between German and Italian. One reason for selecting this narrative was due to a prevalence of talk about this same teacher on other occasions across the data (the first occurring here), and another reason was the reaction of the participants to the narrative, which caused extended discussion.

Moscato's professional interpreting career had emerged in subsequent talk (both in one-to-one interviews and group interviews) where her work with important public figures such the Pope, Berlusconi (the then Italian prime minister) and Angel Merkel (the present German Chancellor) appeared to have a significant effect on some of the participants, in particular Matteo (who introduced her here in his narrative), giving a

certain elevated status to her assertions about the identity of the professional interpreter and the resources required to become one.

First I give a transcript of the interview episode in which this narrative emerged and then go on to analyse it through the lens of narrative positioning analysis.

- 1 Matteo: (.) yes cos i: (.) I really want to become an interpreter
2 cos i:: m:: (.) I like the this job I:: (.) well I::
3 (.) I attended the classes of elena moscato the interpreter: (.)
4 the italian interpreter and well er: m: she: (.) she: gave us her
5 her feedback about the interpreter experience (..) er:: there's a lot
6 of stress a lot of m: (2.0) a lot of stress lot m: and
7 Rosa: she's kinda negative to be honest = ((general laughter))
8 Matteo: =yes
9 Rosa: about it
10 Matteo: yes yes yes
11 Rosa: about the interpreting (.) 'all the time she's saying (.) I actually
12 want to ask her like if she regrets her choice ((laughter))
13 because she's always saying that 'it's so: much stre::ss it's so
14 mu::ch ((high pitched intonation, whining tone))
15 [you won't have any
16 Maria: [(it's just for the competition)
17 Rosa: other life if you're interpreting
18 Fed: [(xxxxxxxx)
19 Rosa: if you want to become [an interpreter:
20 Maria: [(xx)
21 Rosa: and it's kinda negative
22 Alan: yes
23 Matteo: yes she talked about talent (..)
24 Rosa: mm
25 Alan: ah:
26 Matteo: ah: (.) yes (.) she said erm: if you want to (.) if you want to
27 be an interpreter you have to (.) well you need talent

28 Alan: uh hu

29 Silvia: ok I'm ou:t= ((laughs, general laughter))

30 Matteo: =and we said oh my god do i have talent or not (.) an:::d cos she

31 just said well you have to know the language you have to

32 know the the grammar the: the word the vocabulary (.) all these

33 things but (.) there's a: (.) a: percent m:: needed to be an interpreter

34 (.) then well you have to you need talent to do that to do that

35 job (.) a::nd well the:: the classroom the: the other students were

36 all (.) all scared cos they just

37 said well do we have talent or not (.) and but she said well if

38 you're here at the Sslmit you have talent ((matter of fact tone))

39 Alan: hmm

40 (.) and so: (.) I don't know what what does she mean with talent

41 or not (.) but well

(Group 1 interview. Recording times, 54.05 – 57.00. See appendix A: p.450, lines 1456 - 1509)

I now analyse the narrative as described in chapter three (section 3.8.3), applying the three analytical levels. In this first example I restate the aims of each level (for clarity), although in subsequent analysis I do not.

5.2.1 Level 1: Positioning of characters in the narrative event.

- a. Where is the narrative situated and how does it develop?
- b. How are the characters portrayed and relationally positioned?

As previously stated (see section 3.8.3), *Level one* focuses on the narrative event, principally on the setting, developing action and the characters portrayed, analysing in particular: the types of actions attributed to the protagonists; the motives attributed to the protagonists for these actions; and the characteristics attributed to the protagonists and other narrative characters.

Matteo initiates the narrative by introducing the character of Moscato, and how she talked to the class (and him, as a member of the class) about the ‘interpreter experience’ (line 5). Although Moscato is evidently a teacher in the institution, (Matteo says that he attended her ‘classes’ in line 3, which positions her as a teacher), she is indexed by him in the narrative as ‘the interpreter’ (line 3), positioning her as a professional in the field of interpreting. Matteo’s summary of Moscato’s ‘feed back’ (line 5) about interpreting, positions her as providing valid and informed information about the identity of the interpreter, which he summarizes as being one dominated by stress, as seen in lines 5 and 6, reinforced by the repetition of ‘lot’ and ‘stress’ and the heightened emphasis on the word ‘stress’ itself.

5 there’s a lot

6 of stress a lot of m: (2.0) a lot of stress lot m:

Matteo does not report Moscato’s speech when he makes this assertion but appears to make a statement of his own personal conviction, that ‘there’s a lot of stress’ in interpreting, as though he has come to an understanding and acceptance of this through his listening to Moscato’s ‘feed back’ on the experience of interpreting.

Rosa comes in on the next turn (line 7), presenting herself as a character in the same narrative as well, and present in the scene that Matteo has introduced. Although Matteo has introduced the teacher as a valid commentator on the identity of the professional interpreter, Rosa focuses instead on the teacher’s own personality in her turn, describing Moscato as being ‘kinda negative’ (line 7), indexicalising the teacher therefore as one of those people in the social world who is ‘kinda negative’ as opposed to ‘kinda positive’. Encouraged by group laughter, and Matteo’s affirmation of this (his repetition of ‘yes’ in rapid succession in line 10), Rosa goes on to use reported direct speech to further position the teacher as being excessively negative (lines 11-15).

The high pitched ‘whining-like’ tone with which Rosa introduces Moscato’s reported speech, ‘it’s so: much stre::ss it’s so mu::ch’ (lines 13-14), and the heavily stressed

and lengthened vowels in ‘so:’, ‘stre::ss’ and ‘mu::ch’, is a prosodic mode of positioning the teacher as ‘continually’ lamenting the interpreter’s life, marked lexically as well, by the frequency adverb ‘always’ in ‘always saying’ (line 13). Prosodic and lexical choices in reported speech are a means of characterising a person’s speech and ‘limiting the kind of voice that the character might have’ (Wortham, 2001:73), (see section 2.11.2, on the use of reported voices in relation to narrative positioning). Unlike Matteo, Rosa does not introduce the concept that interpreting is stressing as though it were her own personal conviction, but rather as the teacher’s own personal *lament* in the class, one that she mimics in appears to be a tragicomic manner.

Rosa’s positioning of Moscato as being overly negative is then used to position the teacher as having possibly chosen the wrong career

- 11 about the interpreting (.) ‘all the time she’s saying (.) I actually
12 want to ask her like if she regrets her choice ((laughter))

This serves to undermine further Moscato’s claims about the identity of the professional interpreter, as Rosa suggests that the actual profession is not suited to her. Rosa continues by reporting another thing that Moscato told the class, that ‘you won’t have any other life if you are interpreting’ (lines 15-17), making a final comment of her own that such a statement is ‘kinda negative’, thereby re-enforcing her initial assertion (line 7) and further suggesting that the teacher is potentially exaggerating the demands of the job to the class. Maria’s comment ‘it’s just for the competition’ (line 16), which comes in the middle of Rosa’s talk, might appear inexplicable if it were not for an ethnographic note. Based on my field notes from talk outside the research interviews (see appendix B, page 739), the participants had talked about teachers as being potential competitors for the jobs they might be applying for after finishing their studies. In this context, Maria appears to be positioning Moscato as attempting to dissuade students from becoming interpreters in order to reduce possible future competition in the interpreting market. Maria is therefore ratifying Rosa’s positioning of Moscato as exaggerating the negative aspects of the job.

After Rosa's final comment about Moscato being 'kinda negative' (line 21), Matteo takes up the next turn with the sentence substitute 'yes' (line 23). At first this appears to be a confirmation of what Rosa has said about the teacher, but it actually serves as the initiation of a cue for a change in subject

- 23 Matteo: yes she talked about talent (..)
 24 Rosa: mm
 25 Alan: ah:
 26 Matteo: ah: (.) yes (.) she said erm: if you want to (.) if you want to
 27 be an interpreter you have to (.) well you need talent
 \

Matteo's 'yes' actually communicates closure on Rosa's talk about the teacher's personality and a shift back to what the teacher said in the classroom, signalled by his introduction to her reported speech, 'she talked about' (line 23). Through this reported speech (lines 26-27) Matteo describes the teacher as telling the students that they need 'talent' to become interpreters, affirming the importance of talent through repetition of the phrase 'if you want' (two sequential incidences) in relation to being an interpreter, and the use of 'have to' and 'need' adjacently preceding 'talent'. The falling intonation on the final word, talent, also suggests finality, as though there were no room for debate.

By reporting the teacher's speech in this lexical and prosodic manner Matteo is re-positioning the teacher as a valid informant again about the identity of the interpreter, foregrounding 'talent' as potentially being an important part of this identity.

Matteo then reports a question, in relation to the teacher's reported assertion about needing talent, which he narrates as being posed by himself and the other students in the classroom scene,

- 30 and we said oh my god (.) do i have talent or not
 / \

Matteo introduces the other students as a collective character in the story event, describing them all as asking this same question in unison, ‘do I have talent’, and therefore positioning them all as sharing the same doubts.

Directly after reporting the students’ question about talent, Matteo goes on to report Moscato’s following speech

31 you have to know the language you have to
32 know the the grammar the: the word the vocabulary (.) all these
33 things

The repetition of ‘you have to know’ (lines 31-33) in relation to language, grammar and vocabulary suggests a form of *check-list* of imperative essentials for anyone wishing to claim an interpreter identity, almost an incontestable fact.

After this list, Matteo then repeats the teacher’s reported speech about the need for talent again, using the same verbs as before (have to, need), in the same order, reinforcing its importance (line 34). The collective character of the whole class is then described as being ‘scared’ (line 36), and repeating the same question to themselves as before (lines 35-36),

35 the other students were all
36 (.) all scared cos they just
37 said well do we have talent or not

The possibility of not having talent in order to claim an interpreter identity is represented by Matteo as a collective emotive response from the class, presented as though it were a *chorus* of generally shared preoccupation. This appears to position all the students, him included, as being decidedly uncomfortable with the concept, and seemingly questioning if anyone can in actual fact lay claim to it.

Moscato's continued reported speech however is introduced by Matteo as a response to the students' question of whether they have talent or not, suggesting that anyone who has made it into the institution must have talent (lines 37-38),

37 (.) and but she said well if

38 you're here at the Sslmit you have talent ((matter of fact tone))

Moscato's reported speech is presented as the teacher's apparent attempt at a resolution of the problem of talent, however Matteo's own final comment (lines 40 - 41) makes it clear that he was not satisfied by her response and is still dubious about what she means by the concept.

40 and so: (.) I don't know what does she mean with talent

41 or not

The use of the present tense here brings the problem from the past narrative event into the present narrative-telling event, the here and now of it's telling, and reinforces it as being an on-going, unresolved preoccupation for Matteo.

I now move on to level two analysis, looking specifically at the narrative-telling event, again I summarize the analytic focus before commencing the analysis itself.

5.2.2 Level 2: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

a. How was the narrative occasioned in the surrounding talk and why was it told?

Level two focuses on the narrative-telling event. Firstly it looks at how the narrative emerges in the surrounding talk, how the narrative is occasioned and with what objectives? It then looks at how the interlocutors align themselves in the actual narration: how they co-construct the narrative, challenging and/or ratifying the others' telling by (re)positioning the characters, as well as how they use reported speech (when introduced) in support of this positioning.

Matteo's narrative emerges in talk about wanting to become an interpreter, coming as it does after his affirmation, 'I really want to become an interpreter' (line 1).

In terms of the interactional positioning of the interlocutors in the telling, Matteo positions the group and the researcher as accepting the teacher's classroom talk on the identity of the professional interpreter (indicated by his own assertive statement that 'there is a lot of stress'). Rosa however is unwilling to ratify Matteo's claim, by choosing instead to undermine the teacher's validity by positioning Moscato as being a negative character for the group and exaggerating the negative aspects of the job. This is ratified by Maria who contextualises it as Moscato's attempt to dissuade students from entering the profession, removing them from being competitors in the job market. Rosa's non-ratification is enforced by her use of reported direct speech where she mimics the teacher 'whining' (communicated prosodically) about the stress in her job, and telling the students that they will have no free time if they pursue the same career. Rosa positions herself and the group then as not sharing the teacher's negatively orientated character, and therefore as being distrustful of her negative comments about the subsequent interpreter identity she describes. The suggestion appears to be that the group cannot trust the teacher, as her character is too negative.

Matteo refuses this positioning however, by foregrounding the importance of Moscato's comments again, reinforcing her validity as an informant for the group, and backgrounding Rosa's characterisation of the teacher's character as being potentially irrelevant and inconsequential to them.

When Matteo reports the teacher's introduction of the concept of 'talent' in the narrative however, there appears to be an alignment with Silvia and the interview group's negative reaction. This is indicated by Silvia's comment, 'ok I'm out' (when talent is first mentioned in line 26), suggesting that she does not think of herself as having talent and therefore as not having the resources to be an interpreter, and the general group laughter that follows, which can be interpreted as general ratification of the same position by the other participants. Although Matteo positions the group as ratifying 'stress' as being part of the interpreter's professional identity, his description

of the characters in the narrative as being ‘scared’ on hearing the teacher suggesting that having talent is important as well, problematizes it. Matteo’s final self-directed question in the present tense (line 40), positions himself as seeing ‘talent’ as a potential impediment for his becoming an interpreter and by extension for all present, both in the narrative and the narrative-telling event

40 so: (.) I don’t know what does she mean with talent
41 or not

I now move on to the third and final level of analysis.

5.2.3 Level 3: Connecting levels one and two to Discourses

- a. How do levels one and two relate to individual stances towards Discourses?
- b. How are these stances common to other positioning across the whole data, which might suggest collective positioning processes in relation to certain Discourses?

Level three brings levels one and two together in relation to how the participants’ position themselves in relation to wider Discourses. The relevancies of these Discourses are highlighted by looking for patterns in other narratives in the data, and in ethnographic data from outside the interview, to introduce a discussion about the wider implications of these narratives beyond their local context (see section 2.13).

Towards its end, Matteo’s narrative introduces a Discourse, Gee’s capital D discourse (see section 2.10).

30 Matteo: and we said oh my god do i have talent or not (.) an:::d cos she
31 just said well (.) you have to know the language you have to
32 know the the grammar the: the word the vocabulary (.) all these

33 things but there's a: (.) a percent m:: needed to be an interpreter
 34 (.) then well you have to you need talent to do that to do that
 35 job (.)

What is notable here is that Matteo's reported speech foregrounds Moscato's talk about 'talent' (line 30) and backgrounds issues of having 'to know' lexicogrammatical aspects of the language in order to become an interpreter (lines 31-33), positioning the latter as something that is taken for granted by the teacher and the students. Matteo and the students' reported question 'do I have talent or not' (line 30) assumes primary importance, coming after the *dramatically* reported class reaction in the narrative event, 'oh my god' (line 30), at the beginning of the turn. His introduction of the teacher's reported speech in the following part of the narrative indicates that Matteo is positioning her as expecting the students in the narrative event (and the participants in the narrative-telling event) to see what follows as being taken for granted. The adverb *just* in 'she *just* said' (lines 30-31), signals that students should take it as understood by Moscato that they '..have to know the language ... have to know the grammar the: word the vocabulary' (lines 31-32). This reported speech comes in a list-like form, where each element is preceded by the modal verb of obligation 'you have to' in rapid succession. The expectation that students know what appears here to be everything about a language (suggested by the definite article, 'the language') can be interpreted as a potential Discourse then.

This Discourse appears to focus solely on the interpreter's need to have heightened linguistic competence however (grammar and lexis), with no mention of other forms of competence, such as social and cultural understandings in relation to what language means in different socio-cultural contexts. Moscato's *de facto* list of things that students need to know ('the language..the grammar..the vocabulary') is backgrounded by Matteo, making it appear an almost 'it goes without saying' comment. However, what is notable here is the focus on what can be termed as 'cognitive and linguistic skills' (see chapter 1, section 1.4.2). The Discourse that appears almost to slip in under the lines here, and to be accepted by the participants (suggested by its not being challenged), is that a student-interpreter has to focus on language proficiency principally, a Discourse which is notable for the absence to any reference to

interpersonal and cross-cultural skills, positioning the interpreter-student more as an invisible conduit for language exchanges, instead of an agentive interlocutor in the interpreting process (Ibid).

I now go on to underline the relevancy of this Discourse in my research by giving other examples of its presence across the data, which can be seen as being more than local, and part of wider ‘patterns’ (De Fina, 2013), (see section 2.13).

5.2.4 The interpreter as a ‘language expert’

Other examples of this Discourse appear among the participants in the first group interview³¹. The examples given below can be considered as narratives in that they project the hypothetical character of each participant as though they had already assumed, or are in the process of attempting to assume, the future identity of the professional interpreter.

In the same group interview, when Matteo expresses a concern about his language learning he complains that he makes too many mistakes, and that his German in particular is ‘a mess’. When in the interview I asked him to explain what he meant by this he responded

- 1 Matteo: (3.0) er::: well cos I think that at the end of the of the:: of the university
- 2 at the end of the sslmit i: I just have to speak (2.0) per- perfectly (.) er
- 3 but I have to speak a perfect language (.) first language and second
- 4 language cos we won’t become I think we won’t become to become
- 5 interpreters or translators and so em: (.) I:: I want to become an
- 6 interpreter and I think that you just need a proficiency that is
- 7 (.) eh quite amazing one near to a mother tongue level

(Group 1 interview: recording times, 00:29:21 – 00:30:02 mins. See appendix A: p.428, lines 724 – 734)

³¹ Also from my observations in the field. See appendix B, p. 740 (an encounter with Giorgio).

Here, Matteo appears to be drawing on the same Discourse that emerged in his narrative about Moscato (see section 5.2.3) as he is evidently equating language learning, being able to ‘speak a perfect language’ (line 3), (i.e. being a language expert), with becoming an interpreter. Failure to reach perfection in a language is treated as being synonymous with failing to become an interpreter, as without attaining that level ‘we won’t become ... interpreters’ (lines 4 - 5). Matteo finishes his turn by comparing that level to being ‘near to a mother tongue level’ (line 7), introducing a goal which is akin to being a near ‘native speaker’ (I focus more specifically on language learning in relation to native speaker models in chapter 6).

Also, in the same group interview, Maria talks about having to be perfect in the language, ‘at least the grammar’. When pressed by me to explain what she means by perfect, she replies

- 1 Maria: I mean that I can perfectly understand and perfectly speak even with (.)
2 couple of mistakes that’s fine but I have to be able to perfectly
3 understand whatever they’re saying...

(Group 1 interview: recording times, 00:30:49 – 00:30:00, See appendix A: p.429, lines 755 – 759)

Maria allows for a ‘couple of mistakes’ (line 2) in her spoken language but insists on being able ‘to perfectly understand whatever they are saying’ (lines 2-3), placing more emphasis on the ‘perfect’ passive reception of language whilst allowing for a little less than perfect active production of it in her speech. As with Matteo, Maria positions the identity of the interpreter as being akin to being a language expert, an ability to understand everything said and a near perfect ability to speak a language.

In his second one-to-one interview Matteo introduces another narrative about Moscato, concerning his being away for the entire second year on an Erasmus programme in Germany and being worried that he will miss all his mediation classes.

Immediately after reporting his question to Moscato

well a year without mediation erm how can I become an interpreter?

(Matteo 2 interview. See appendix A: p.524, lines 356- 358)

Matteo then reports Moscato's comment and gives his own reaction to it.

- 1 a:nd the professor moscato said (.) no just don't worry (.) you the first thing
- 2 is to go er: just go to germany learn learn german and then I can teach you
- 3 the the well she said I can teach you the techniques in an hour (..) but the
- 4 most important thing the most important thing is to learn the (.) the language
- 5 and so: but (..) I think that (.) in my opinion there's a world behind the
- 6 language

(Matteo 2 interview. Recording times, 00:22:47 – 00:23:32. See appendix A: p. 549, lines 358 – 368)

As in the narrative in the first group interview (see sections 5.2 - 5.2.9), the teacher is reported as directly reintroducing the Discourse that the most important thing an interpreter needs to know is 'the language' (line 4), whilst backgrounding other aspects, which are described as 'techniques' that can be learnt in 'an hour' (line 3). Matteo appears to challenge this assertion here however (in contrast to his narrative in the first group interview) by stating that there is more to becoming an interpreter than just the language, as 'there is a world behind the language' (lines 5-6). I look more closely at all these narratives in chapter 6, where I look specifically at the importance of language as a resource for my participants.

5.2.5 The Discourse of the interpreter as a language expert

Having established the relevancy of the Discourse of the interpreter as a language expert (see section 5.2.3) beyond one single local interaction, appearing in other

interactions across the data, I now turn to connect it to the wider world of the institution, which requires drawing on ethnographic detail.

As stated in chapter one (section 1.2), the institution broadly aligns itself with the ‘Dublin Descriptors’³² in describing the learning outcomes that students are expected to achieve after completing the first cycle degree (namely in relation to, ‘Knowledge and understanding’, ‘Applying knowledge and understanding’, ‘Making judgements’, ‘Communication skills’ and ‘Learning skills’).

Under ‘knowledge and understanding’ the learning outcome is described as ‘linguistic - cultural’, where culture is given a second place position. Moreover, the actual description of the outcomes is predominantly language learning orientated, occurring first in the list of expected outcomes, i.e. knowing at least three languages well, the first two being at a C1 level within the European framework, and a third at ‘intermediate level’ with ‘relevant culture reference’; where culture appears almost of secondary importance.

‘Applying knowledge and understanding’ is also distinctly language based, where the student is described as being expected to

- ... express themselves fluently and spontaneously in two foreign languages, and with relative fluency and spontaneity, in a third foreign language;
- Is able to apply the skills and knowledge gained in the field of intercultural and interlingual mediation between the Italian and at least three foreign languages;

(Translated by myself from the institution’s web-page³³, p3)

The emphasis here is on students’ ‘fluency’ and ‘spontaneity’ in their languages, and any cultural dimensions are seemingly secondary, mentioned in the second expected

³² Presented in 2003 and adopted in 2005 as the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area.

³³ <http://corsi.unibo.it/Laurea/MediazioneLinguisticaInterculturale/Pagine/Presentazione.aspx>.

outcome as applying ‘skills and knowledge gained in the field of intercultural and interlingual mediation’.

In addition to the literature presented on the department’s website I would also like to introduce myself as an ethnographic informant, having been a teacher working in the institution for over seven years. From an ethnographic perspective the researcher’s own interaction with the community under study is always considered legitimate and relevant to research (see chapter two, section 2.15).

In extensive conversations with teachers of interpreting in the institution over my seven years in the department, I have observed a general bias towards judging students’ performances in the class based on the precise use of lexico-grammatical aspects of the language, with little to no emphasis on communicative competence. Furthermore, working with students in one-to-one sessions in the capacity of an *English language tutor* (a position I held from 2011-2013, see chapter one, section 1.6.1) I have observed a distinctly lexis and grammar orientated focus in the way students talk about and judge their own performances in interpreting classes.

5.2.6 The interpreter as an individual with ‘talent’: Wider implications

Returning to Matteo’s narrative again (see section 5.2), although the Discourse of interpreters having to know all ‘the language’ (to be language experts), is not challenged by either Matteo or the group, Moscato’s assertion that students need to have ‘talent’ in order to become interpreters is. The questioning of the need for talent occurs repeatedly in the subsequent 2,000 words of dialogue in the first group interview (with 50 occurrences of the noun ‘talent’ and/or adjective ‘talented’). A potential reason for the group being uncomfortable with the concept is that from a modern, Western, sociocultural perspective talent is usually attributed to people and not claimed by one’s self. Furthermore, it is usually assumed that people are born with talent, and that it is innate and cannot be acquired.

The participants challenge the teacher's assertion then (following on from Matteo's narrative), offering alternatives, principally *hard work and/or study* as substitute resources for becoming interpreters.

Silvia: no I think you:: if you've got talent your lucky but (.) well you can achieve your goal even if you don't have it because you are studying hard ...

(Group 1 interview. See appendix A: p. 454, lines 1589-1592)

Federico: oh yes yes I think what I have achieved I have achieved because I did a lot together it's not because I'm talented I hope because it was I studied hard and I practice...

(Group 1 interview. See appendix A: 454, lines 1606-1610)

Maria: it's not talent it's hard work

(Group 1 interview. See appendix A: p.456, line 1665)

In the group one interview (again following Matteo's narrative), Maria introduces the entrance exam to the institution to support her own counter discourse to talent. Being unsuccessful in her first attempt to get in, she comments

...what does it mean last year I wasn't talented and this year I am? It doesn't it doesn't so I didn't like the word talent

(Group 1 interview. See appendix A: p.455, lines 1645 -1646)

Her final comment that she didn't like the word talent, at first appears to be a reference to Matteo's narrative (a reference to Moscato's talk about students needing talent), however as Maria continues it becomes clear that she is referring to something else, initiating her own narrative about her first day in the institution

Maria: ...i mean it was good to feel that way the first day you're finally here you got it
you did it you've been able to get here and the (test) and (.) everything (.)
you did it

Alan: hm hm

Maria: that's great (.) but I don't think the word talent was what I was expecting (.)

Alan: wh- what word would you use?

Maria: (..) I would use (.) err: (...) congratulation (.) you did it (.) now keep on it it's
not like you get in so you're an interpreter no way (.)

(Group 1 interview. Recording times: 01:01:41 – 01:02:16. See appendix A: p.455,
lines 1648 – 1660)

As the interviewer, I was not entirely sure at first who the characters were and what the exact setting was (beyond 'the first day' in the institution). What emerged in a continuation of the narrative however was that Maria was describing the opening day speech given to new students on the first day in Sslmit.

Maria: so:: talent wasn't the word I was I wanted I wanted to hear (.) absolutely not

Silvia: i'm i'm not saying that you are talented if you get get in I'm saying that (.)
[there are people

Maria: [it's not what you saying

it's what we: were welcomed with (.) they said ohh you're the more talented
one ((gushing tone)) the best of the best you're the la crème delle crème

(Group 1 interview. Recording times 01:03:15 – 01:03:40. See appendix A:
p.457, lines 1690 – 1700)

Maria's narrative connects Moscato's assertion about interpreters needing talent to the wider institution, and appears to embed it in a larger Discourse in general, that higher education (hence forth HE) institutions position students' to expect professional success, by implying that it is somehow axiomatic to their gaining entrance to them.

Maria appears to pick up on Moscato's reported speech in Matteo's narrative, that students can assume that they have talent by the fact that they have gained entrance to

the institution ('if you're here at the sslmit you have talent', lines 37-38), and seems to invoke a Discourse that being called talented is only one element of a general attempt on the part of the institution (or its representatives) to position students as being 'the best of the best.. la crème delle crème'. Maria's reported speech of the opening day introduction might be seen as being exaggerated, as it seems unlikely that the speaker said this in such a manner, notable also by the 'gushing' prosodic overlay with which it is said. Indeed, by voicing it in the manner in which she does Maria appears to be criticising a more general 'selling' point that she perceived in the opening day speech, which elevates the department's standing in the academic community by suggesting that only the best students get in and succeed in their chosen paths. A point she takes as suggesting that the students are already well on their way to their future professions, and which she refutes ('it's not like you get in so you're an interpreter no way').

Silvia, in her first one-to-one interview also makes reference to the opening day speech where, although she does not mention talent, she reports the institution's representatives as greeting the new students with similar praise. The effect of this is described by Silvia at putting a lot of pressure on her to perform.

Silvia: m:: not qu:ite I mean the first day we were here (.) ah: in aula magna

Alan. hm

Silvia: they told us you're the best (.) because you just (.) entered the be:st school in italy for example I was like oh my god ((intake of breath with half laugh)) a lot of pressure

(Silvia 1 interview. Recording times: 00:07:12 – 00:07:33. See appendix A: p. 397, lines 189-196)

Although not specifically referring to talent, Silvia's narrative has resonances with Maria's, suggesting again the larger Discourse, that some HE institutions position their students as being the best by reason of their getting in, and 'promote' their own academic reputation consequently.

When I asked Silvia if she knew she was entering an ‘important’ institution and if so why she reacted as she did to the opening day speech, she replied that she knew it was important and that was why she had chosen it, but

- 1 Silvia: a::h I mean the outside world is n- not like (..) you imagine it you plan
- 2 it so: (.) it can surprise you even if you know it (.) if you know the truth
- 3 or whatever they say (..) it’s surprising but it’s for me it’s a positive
- 4 surprise because it’s ok I i knew it so: (.) ok
- 5 Alan: h hm
- 6 Silvia: just facing it and trying to: (.) to handle it ((small laugh))

(Silvia 1 interview. Recording time 00:08:06 – 00:08:28. See appendix A: p.398, lines 212 – 220)

Silvia’s talk here positions the opening day speech as having a considerable impact on her. Whilst in one way she appears to be trying to normalise what was said as something she expected, at the same time she expresses it as a surprise, which has become a challenge for her. Her repetition of her ‘knowing’ ‘the truth’ beforehand (lines 2-4), that it was an important institution, is contrasted with her repetition of being ‘surprised’, and having to ‘face’ it and ‘handle it’ (lines 3-6), to face and handle the pressure of being considered the best. The opening day speech is also positioned as an initiation into another ‘world’, as she says at the beginning ‘I mean the outside world is n- not like you imagine it’ (line 1), which suggests that she is being introduced into the Discourse of being the best from day one, with all the implications that may have on her having to perform beyond her expectations.

In Matteo’s second one-to-one interview he recounts a narrative, which also has some relevancy here, in which the Erasmus requisites for attending a German university are set at a high level of linguistic competence by the institutional co-ordinator. Matteo says that students of German are expected to have a ‘B1 level’ (European framework of reference) in order to apply, when Matteo himself is still only a beginner. When he relates his argument with the co-ordinator over this, that there is still time for him to improve before the Erasmus programme begins in the second term, the latter is reported as saying

it's not possible because our reputation is high and we can't send beginners to german(y)

(Matteo 2 interview. See appendix A: p.576, lines 1258 - 1260)

Matteo's reported speech therefore positions the co-ordinator as prizing the institution's international 'reputation' above Matteo's individual linguistic needs, treating that reputation as cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986) in the academic market and as outweighing any single student's needs (see chapter two, section 2.12, for a detailed description of Bourdieusian theory).

5.2.7 Higher Education and neoliberal Discourses

The Discourse that emerges through the data previously explored³⁴ (sections 5.2 - 5.2.3) can perhaps be seen from the perspective of neoliberal Discourses in HE. This is principally seen as the 'marketization' of HE where

(t)he restructuring of higher education (HE) according to neoliberal market principles has constructed the student consumer as a social category, thereby altering the nature, purpose and values of HE...

(Naidoo & Williams, 2014: 1)

This reconceptualisation of students as consumers first became prominent in the United States in the 1970s where changes in government financial aid policies, along with a rise in tuition fees, meant students became *investors* in education, being the main source of university funding (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997. Cited in Naidoo & Williams, Ibid). Similar trends have been documented in Great Britain (Gewirtz & Cribb 2013) and in Australia, where Craig (2014) notes that

...much of the literature concerning higher education suggests that the nature of the typical institution is changing to a model resembling a corporate and

³⁴ Also evidenced in the field as well. See appendix B (field notes), p. 739 (socializing after the first group interview).

socially accountable structure, and with it, the role of the academic and faculty is also evolving.

(Ibid: 295)

This ideological shift has meant that

...today we question whether concepts such as ‘student’ and ‘teacher’ are appropriate in the postmodern age. Do we have students, or are they customers, clients, stakeholders, constituents, or (indeed) products? Do faculty members profess, or do they manage, coordinate, or facilitate learning?

(Birnbaum, 2000. Cited in Craig, Ibid)

The University of Bologna also appears to be following suit in this marketization process in HE, as evidenced on its website. When talking about the university’s ‘identity’ the site states

The identity of the Alma Mater Studiorum-University of Bologna can be defined as the set of values characterising the institution, its unique historical heritage, *the products and services it delivers generally in the fields of learning*, research and culture.

(<http://www.unibo.it>³⁵, my emphasis)

Using the language of economics then, learning and research are described as ‘products and services’, and in other documents, such as the university’s ‘strategic plan’, students are referred to as ‘stakeholders’³⁶.

Furthermore, the university has introduced ‘a growing number of consumer levers to

³⁵ <http://www.unibo.it/en/university/who-we-are/image-identity-brand>

³⁶ Described in the university’s ‘strategic plan’, a document outlining the University’s ‘mission’ and ‘objectives’. http://www.unibo.it/en/attachments/strategic-plan-2013-2015/@@download/file/Piano_Strategico_2013-2015%20ENG_30-04-2014.pdf

enhance student choice' (Naidoo & Williams, 2014: 3), in particular performance indicators such as student satisfaction surveys. These surveys are then used as 'marketing tools' (Ibid) to entice prospective students to 'invest' their future professional prospects in the university. Sslmit's website for example describes the majority of its students in the three-year degree (88.7% in 2013) as showing an elevated degree of satisfaction with their courses and

83.5% of these declared that they would be happy to reapply for the same degree... and 72.7% were overall satisfied with their degree in interpreting.

(Translated by myself from the Sslmit website³⁷)

Seen from the perspective of this Discourse then Matteo's initial narrative (sections 5.2 – 5.2.3), and other participant narratives specifically linked to the opening day speech (section 5.2.4), appear to be part of a wider university positioning of them as privileged consumers of important 'products and services'. The university's own prestige and value on the academic market is framed as a guarantee of future professional success, as the student-interpreters who managed to pass its entrance exam have already being identified as 'the most talented' among their peers, or as Maria describes it 'the best of the best...la crème de la crème'.

5.2.8 The interpreter as a person living a life of 'stress'.

Moscato's claim, introduced through Matteo's narrative, that an interpreter's professional life is principally one of 'stress', is recurrent in many of the other participants' narratives in the data (which I present in this section). Matteo's positioning of himself in relation to this claim is therefore reflected in other narrative episodes.

³⁷ <http://www.scuolalingue.unibo.it/it/scuola/conoscere-la-scuola?target=studenti-in-arrivo>

Although Rosa challenges the claim made by Moscato in Matteo's narrative, by positioning Moscato's social character as being excessively negative (see sections 5.2 - 5.2.3), in her second one-to-one interview she appears to invoke it herself. Rosa tells me that she no longer wants to work as a top interpreter (working for institutions such as the UN), and when I ask her why she responds in the following manner.

- 1 Rosa: ah I don't know I mean (...) to work in the UN is not possible and I
2 don't even want to I mean it's lots of stress I don't want to have a
3 life that too much stressful so (.) I'm like (.) I mean (.) I don- I right
4 now I don't have any idea what I'd like to do but (.) I know only
5 something with languages I would like to do that but not but not
6 something rea:lly stressful (...)
7 Alan: so why did you change your mind?
8 Rosa: er all- maybe because also of the things that our german teacher said
9 about it being so: stressful so: (.) em (.) I don't want to have a live a
10 life like that so (...)

(Rosa 2 interview. Recording time, 00:17:48 – 00:018:30. See appendix A: p. 594, lines 492 - 509)

Rosa introduces a future, hypothetical narrative about working at the UN, where

- 1 ... to work in the UN is not possible and I
2 don't even want to I mean it's lots of stress

Her character in this narrative is described as not wanting to work at the UN as 'it's a lot of stress', using a declarative sentence (echoing Matteo's in the group interview) and thereby aligning herself with him.

When I ask Rosa why she has changed her mind about becoming an interpreter she reintroduces the character of Moscato (referred to as 'the German teacher', line 8) and positions the teacher as being responsible for the change ('because also the things that our german teacher said about it being so: stressful'). Rosa's use of reported speech recalls her earlier co-constructed narrative with Matteo, where the teacher is described

as telling the students that interpreting is ‘so: stressful’. However, if in the previous narrative this reported speech was used to undermine the teacher’s claim (positioned as being endemic of a generally negative social character), here it appears to be re-enforcing it as true.

In the narrative-telling event I position myself as an institutional representative, requesting that Rosa explain her decision now, not to become a top interpreter (which she had expressed in her previous one-to-one interview). The question might also be seen as accusing Rosa of taking a new position that is contradictory and inconsistent with her earlier positioning. Rosa’s response then is to introduce the institutional character of the teacher, the ‘german teacher’ (Moscato), positioning her as the reason for Rosa’s change of mind and her talk about interpreting being stressful. Rosa’s final statement positions her (unlike Matteo), as not being the type to ‘live a life like that’ (lines 9-10).

In Silvia’s second one-to-one interview she tells me that she is no longer sure if she wants to be an interpreter as well. I ask her what has made her change her mind, highlighting her previous talk (in her first one-to-one interview) about it being ‘a dream’ of hers. Silvia talks about all the new people she has met over the first term who have been influential in her thinking about alternative possibilities to becoming an interpreter. When I suggest that her life appears to have become more ‘complicated’ she responds in the following way

- 1 Alan: [it sounds like
- 2 life has become more complicated (.) am I wrong in interpreting that?
- 3 Silvia: well complicated err to become an interpreter is quite complicated (.) so: to:
- 4 to be thinking about reaching that goal (.) ah I think that (.) err leaves a lot of
- 5 erm stress (.) er but if you think about life er (.) one step (.) er (..) at a time (.) I
- 6 think you: you enjoy more ((laughs))

(Silvia 2 interview. Recording time: 00:31:47 – 00:32:22. See appendix A: p 640, lines 631 - 640)

My suggestion that ‘life’ has become more complicated for Silvia (lines 1-2) is affirmed by her and directed specifically at her becoming an interpreter (line 3). Silvia introduces a future, hypothetical narrative where she appears to position herself as an interpreter, and is therefore in a position to comment on how getting to that point is ‘quite complicated’ (line 3). She then goes on to describe the thought of ‘reaching that goal’ as leaving ‘a lot of stress’ (lines 4-5). Silvia positions herself in the narrative-telling event as wanting to ‘enjoy’ herself more (line 6), and to avoid the ‘stress’ of thinking about becoming an interpreter. This is presented as her need to concentrate on the present and to take life ‘one step at a time’ (line 5), (see chapter 6, section 6.6, for a development of this theme).

My comment, ‘it sounds like life has become more complicated’, positions Silvia as being confused about what she wants to do in life. Silvia’s affirmation that ‘to become an interpreter is quite complicated’ challenges that positioning by taking a position of authority, informing me that she knows what it takes to be an interpreter, and equating the complexity in her life with the nature of the studies she has undertaken. Silvia further strengthens her decision not to become an interpreter anymore, by positioning her character as being fully aware of the difficulties, and taking a philosophic stance about life in general (e.g. taking life as it comes means for a better more enjoyable life).

The claim that the interpreter’s life is principally one of stress is invoked by Silvia, but it has also expanded its boundaries to include the process of studying to become one as well.

In his second one-to-one interview Matteo also appears to have expanded the claim to the nature of his studies.

- 1 Matteo: (3.0) hm: yes something has changed er (4.0) because i: have seen that
- 2 studying to become an interpreter ah: brings you (a lot of) stress but I’m just
- 3 doing my best a:nd (.) I’m in the right place so: (3.0) I’m just taking it easy
- 4 a:n- (3.0) and that’s it I’m: (...) my my passion is the same (.) i: (.) I spend
- 5 many hours studying an- (...) and so I’m I’m quite relaxed

(Matteo 2 interview. Recording time: 01:09:29 – 00:10:21. See appendix A: p.571, lines 1107 - 1116)

In a similar way to Silvia then, Matteo does not appear to be focused so much on the future goal of becoming an interpreter now, but on ‘just taking it easy’ (line 3), (similar to Silvia’s taking it ‘one step at a time’). Both Silvia and Matteo express an interest in focusing on their present studies, as the actual ‘study’ to become interpreters is seen as stressful in its self, regardless of the actual end job of being an interpreter.

As with Silvia, Matteo has shifted the focus of Moscato’s claim, that being an interpreter is stressful, to *studying to become an interpreter* is stressful. Their shared response to this variation on the claim (introduced by them and not by myself or Moscato) is to concentrate on the present and not the future.

5.2.9 The influence of teachers’ personal discourses on students

Moscato’s claim that the life of an interpreter is one of stress is, I argue, a form of Discourse, but one that is unlike the other Discourses that emerge in Matteo’s narrative in that it appears to be more subjective and tied to one specific teacher’s position. An interpreter’s life might have been framed in many other ways other than one of stress (i.e. ‘challenging’ or ‘stimulating’, when engaging with people from many different walks of life, with so many different views of the world).

As stated in chapter two (section 2.10) I allowed in my research for a form of discourse that came mid-way between capital and small d discourses (Gee, 1994, 1999) a discourse which is defined as

..connected sets of statements, concepts, terms and expressions, which constitute a way of talking about or writing about a particular issue, thus framing the way people understand and act with respect to that issue.

(Watson, 1994: 113)

However, the question arises as to why Moscato's discourse had such an evident effect on some of my participants, in framing the way they understood the interpreter's life as being one of stress. A way of understanding this seems to lie in how the participants positioned her as an interpreter.

One potential reason why Moscato appears so frequently in the data, specifically in Matteo's, but also to a lesser extent in Rosa's, is potentially due to her professional career as an interpreter. A career she is often described as talking about with the students in the classroom.

In her second one-to-one interview Rosa appears to have been dissuaded from becoming an interpreter because of the stress it entails. This acceptance of the teacher's discourse that interpreting is stressful is reinforced by the list of important people Moscato has interpreted for and the stories she tells the class about her experiences, interpreting for important figures in the social world.

Rosa: yeah like working for (.) like (.) really important people it could be like she always says that she had interpreted also for the po:pe for the er Burlusconi and people like that that's one of the reason that when she tells us stories she's always (this thing like) yeah I was so stressed because of that and I don't want to have that kind of responsibility (...) I'd rather like work in some company (..)

(Rosa 2 interview. Recording time, 00:18:42 – 00:19:13. See appendix A: p.595, lines 515 - 527)

The list of important people that Moscato has interpreted for (i.e. the Pope and Burlusconi) enforces her right to comment on the interpreting experience and to enforce her discourse that interpreting is full of stress on her students. Although Rosa resists this discourse initially (in Matteo's first group narrative, see sections 5.2 – 5.2.3) towards the end of her first term (in her second one-to-one interview) she appears to accept it as fact and influential on her questioning her goal of becoming an interpreter.

Matteo also highlights Moscato's importance for him, telling me in his second one-to-one interview that he had actually 'researched' her before coming to the institution and that she was part of the reason he chose Sslmit in the first place.

- 1 ...I did my: my research (.) at home on my own and well I found that she's
- 2 one of the of the best german interpreters here in here in Italy since she works
- 3 for the the: erm:: presidente del consiglio (.) the prime minister (.) here (in the
- 4 world) (.) it's a job that you cannot get if you are not one of the best
- 5 interpreters (.) I think but (.)

(Matteo 2 interview. Recording time: 00:27:43 – 00:28:13. See appendix A: p.552, lines 441-449)

Like Rosa, Matteo mentions Moscato's interpreting for the Italian Prime Minister, 'il presidente del consiglio' (Burlusconi), a fact that he sees as making her 'one of the best interpreters' as it is 'a job that you cannot get' if you are not so (lines 4-5).

The effect of Moscato's discourse on the participants' view of the professional interpreter's life appears to be partially dependent on her impressive list of clients. From a Bourdieusian perspective (1993) she has 'symbolic capital' (see section 2.12), in particular 'cultural capital' within the institution (i.e. cultural acquisitions such as knowledge and skills particularly exemplified by qualifications) and 'social capital' (i.e. accumulated prestige and social status) in the field of professional interpreting. This capital may be an important reason why her discourse has substance and weight for some of my participants. I turn to look more closely at Bourdieu in chapter 9, and how symbolic capital may explain the power of smaller (non-capital D) discourses to shape my participants' views of the professional interpreter.

5.3 Conclusions

Through Matteo's narrative of Moscato's classroom talk in the first group interview, we see how the professional interpreter is portrayed as a 'language expert', an individual with 'talent' and an individual whose life is dominated by 'stress'. This

interpreter identity can be linked to wider Discourses in the institution (see sections 5.2.4 – 5.2.7), which can be seen as having importance for all the participants across the research data.

Moscato's claim that an interpreter needs to know 'the language' foremost, is a Discourse which foregrounds language skills, and backgrounds cultural knowledge and interpersonal skills, positioning the interpreter as a conduit for language and not as an engaged and agentive individual operating in a socio-cultural context. This Discourse is evidenced beyond the teacher's talk however, being present in the institution's literature and its presentation of its courses to the public (see section 5.2.5). Furthermore, it is a Discourse that goes unchallenged by Matteo and the other participants and emerges in other narratives across the data (see section 5.2.4). It is only in Matteo's second interview that he finally appears to challenge it when he refuses to ratify Moscato's claim that learning German is the most important thing and that everything else can be taught in 'an hour' ('in my opinion there's a world behind the language', as he says).

Moscato's other reported claim in Matteo's narrative, that interpreter's need 'talent', can be seen as part of a wider Discourse promoted by the institution, that underlie neoliberal approaches to higher education (see section 5.2.7). Moscato's assertion that her students undoubtedly have talent as they have managed to enter Sslmit promotes the institution as a guarantor of future professional success and as a provider of 'products and services', which are highly valued in the educational market. This Discourse can be seen again in the institution's literature (Ibid) and emerges through other participant narratives (notably, Silvia and Maria's narrative about the opening day speech and Matteo's narrative about his Erasmus application, section 5.2.6).

Moscato's claim, that the life of the interpreter is one of 'stress', appears to be a more localised and subjective discourse, which is given significance in the participants' perception of the identity of the professional interpreter by the 'symbolic capital' the teacher has (notably her list of important clients, as listed by both Rosa and Matteo). Although this discourse seems to be subjective (based on the teacher's personal experience) it nevertheless has far reaching consequences for the career trajectories of

some of the participants. Both Rosa and Sara's narratives in the second term make direct reference to the discourse of an interpreter's life as being one of stress, and appear to reject that career path in part due to its perceived, negative portrayal of the interpreter identity.

I now turn to another narrative from the second group interview, which presents more teacher talk about the professional interpreter, drawing on a different set of Discourses.

5.4 Narrative of Interpreters and staying calm and being in control

In the second group interview, I asked the group what skills they thought were important for an interpreter and what their teachers had said that may have influenced their view. In response to this, Maria initiated a narrative about a teacher (Sabatelli) who had shaped her view of the identity of the interpreter. I will firstly present the extract in full and then analyse it through the lens of narrative positioning analysis.

- 1 Maria: I think professor sabatelli was one of the best one (.) in
- 2 talking about the interpreter profession because she (.)
- 3 everytime we were going mediation in class and we're
- 4 talking with in front of other people she was always saying
- 5 ok you have the control of the situation so: just remember to
- 6 keep calm you're not you do not have to erm (.) like erm
- 7 beg for mer:cy if you don't remember one thing it is your
- 8 job they're talking too fast or they are talking too much so
- 9 just keep calm this is your job this is your moment (.) and
- 10 she was always saying remember not to cross your arms
- 11 because it's not nice to present (.) yourself and
- 12 do not dress in erm (.) in an unproper way just remember
- 13 to be always polite a:nd (..) oh she was always saying
- 14 keep your voice loud because we all have to hear you this
- 15 is (.)keep your voice loud because we all have to hear you this

16 is (.) like your voice this is your instrument to work (.) and so I
 17 think she was one of the best to remember us all what we are
 18 doing here (.) apart from the apart from those who wants to be a
 19 translator (.) but for interpreter she was really doing a great job
 20 (.) I think (.)
 21 Alan: (.) everybody else? (8.0) is that practical that that
 22 explanation you're in control and so on do
 23 [do you
 24 Maria: [yeah
 25 she was always saying it to everybody whilst doing mediation
 26 Alan: but did you have any experiences then that sort of with other (.)
 27 teachers that perhaps (..) contradicted that position or:
 28 Maria: er no but she was the first one to actually tell us
 29 Fed: [(xxxxx) ((Federico talks in background))
 30 Silvia: [she highlighted it very often=
 31 Maria: =no not the only one but she was
 32 ((federico continues talking in background))
 33 Silvia: she highlighted it she reminded very often [and
 34 ((Maria talks in background))
 35 Alan: [rosa
 36 Silvia: when we were at the exams well we've seen I think all of us
 37 seen that (.) it was the proper way to do (..) an exam like that (.)
 38 Alan: hm m
 39 Silvia: so yeah you can be anxious but you have not to show it so: be
 40 calm (.) relax (.) understand what they're telling you and then you
 41 have to have the control of the situation so
 42 Alan: did that help you in the exam then or in the mediation exams
 43 Silvia: hm (.) well I think yes it depends on (.) each and every one
 44 experiences so (.) in my experience yes
 45 Fed: actually I thought (.) I think I was really lucky in the (..)
 46 dialogue I had (.) it was also the first one they were doing I was
 47 the third person they were (or even the second) so they were
 48 probably very calm and (.) but it was- it sound to me that it

49 was easier than the (.) the one we done in class (..)
 50 Maria: well all of [my exams
 51 Fed: [I had
 52 Maria: have been like that
 53 ((background talk))
 54 Alan: sorry they've all being easier?
 55 Maria: yeah (.) than what I expected (...)

(Group 2 interview. Recording time 00:14:43 – 00:18:14. See appendix A: p.679, lines 450 – 541)

5.4.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

In this narrative, the scene is described as the 'mediation class' where the main protagonist is identified as 'Professor Sabatelli' and all the students (including Maria) are represented as a collective whole, receiving feedback from the teacher to their interpreting exercises in the class. Maria voices Sabatelli's advice as being consistent over time, by introducing the teacher's reported speech with the frequency adverb 'always' ('she was always saying', line 4), and proceeds to list the teacher's advice (represented here in bullet points):

- 'you have the control of the situation' (line 5)
- 'remember to keep calm' (lines 5-6)
- 'you do not have to like beg for mercy' (lines 6-7)
- 'if you don't remember one thing it is your job they're talking too fast or they are talking too much' (lines 7-8)
- 'just keep calm this is your job this is your moment' (line 9)
- 'remember not to cross your arms because it's not nice to present (.) yourself' (lines 10-11)
- 'do not dress in erm in an improper way' (line 12)
- 'remember to be always polite' (lines 12-13)

- ‘keep your voice loud because we all have to hear you’ (line 14)
- ‘your voice is your instrument to work’ (line 16)

Maria’s reported speech is characterised by the use of imperative verb forms (i.e. remember, keep) as well as statements in the present simple tense emphasising the advice as being general and true (i.e. this is your job this is your moment). Maria therefore positions the teacher as being informed and in control of all the *facts* by giving direct, clear instructions to the students. The advice appears to be directed at the student-interpreter in relation to what their goals should be if they wish to assume the identity of the professional interpreter. It therefore positions interpreter-students as having identities that are potentially lacking in the attributes described. The repetition of the verb ‘remember’ suggests that students ‘forget’ to do the things the teacher is saying; forgetting to keep calm, forgetting not to cross their arms and forgetting to be polite. The advice also positions the figure of the interpreter (the implied aim for interpreter-students) as having a *visible*, physical presence, and an *agentive* role in the interpreting event. The visibility of the interpreter is highlighted by the teacher’s description of how he/she is physically perceived (i.e. their dress, body postures and voice) and their agentive role is highlighted by how their behaviour is suggested as having a potentially negative effect on the interpreting event (i.e. they need to have control of the situation, keep calm and be polite). The emphasis in the teacher’s advice then is not centred on the interpreter’s *language* but on the character they project to their interlocutors when engaged in the interpreting event.

Maria follows the teacher’s reported speech with her own comment (lines 16 -20),

16 ... and so I
 17 think she was one of the best to remember us all what we are
 18 doing here (.) apart from the apart from those who wants to be a
 19 translator (.) but for interpreter she was really doing a great job
 20 (.) I think (.)

Maria positions the teacher as being ‘one of the best’ (line 17) in giving good advice to those students (herself included) aspiring to become interpreters. Her use of the plural

pronoun in ‘to remember *us* all’ (line 17) positions the whole class as ratifying this. In this way Maria also positions herself as an evaluative judge of what advice is salient and valid for all interpreter-students, suggesting by her choice of verb, ‘remember’ (remind), that the students’ already knew what the advice would be before the teacher even spoke.

When I ask the group if they had had other advice that might have contradicted Sabatelli’s, Silvia ratifies Maria’s claim that it was the best by echoing Maria’s earlier positioning of the group as being continually reminded that it was

33 she highlighted it she reminded very often

Silvia then changes the scene of the narrative to the course examination where she positions the group as ratifying the efficacy of Sabatelli’s advice in that context

36 when we were at the exams well we’ve seen I think all of us
37 seen that (.) it was the proper way to do (..) an exam like that

This change of scene shifts the focus from the professional interpreter to the interpreter-student, studying in the institution and needing to pass exams in order to further their academic careers. Silvia’s reported speech positions Sabatelli’s advice as being relevant to students wishing to pass the interpreting exam, and succeed in the institution, by controlling aspects of their identities that might affect their chances of success.

39 Silvia: so yeah you can be anxious but you have not to show it so: be
40 calm (.) relax (.) understand what they’re telling you and then you
41 have to have the control of the situation

The interpreter-student’s projected identity in the exam is aligned with the identity Sabatelli advocates for the professional interpreter, being calm and showing that you are in control. Silvia’s talk about hiding anxiety however appears to be a personal reflection on her own identity and the difficulties she has to adapting to the required

interpreter-student identity. As with Maria, the emphasis is on the visible and agentive character portrayed and not on the use of language, which is advice directed at the student-interpreter now attempting to pass his/her exams, and not on their future lives as professional interpreters.

When I ask the group if this advice was helpful for all of them, Silvia intervenes first to specify that it was helpful for her but that it was dependent on each student's personal experiences (presumably in the exam). This appears to position the students as experiencing exams in different ways, indicating perhaps their different identities (i.e. being more or less anxious). Federico shifts the focus to the actual material in the exam (having an easier dialogue to interpret from), removing the significance of Sabatelli's advice in the outcome by introducing *luck*. He also shifts the emphasis on the interpreter-student's need to remain calm, to his/her need to have a teacher that is calm in the examination, positioning teachers as becoming increasingly the opposite as the exam proceeds.

5.4.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

Maria introduces the narrative in response to my initial question to all the participants, regarding what teachers had said to make them change their understandings about 'what it means to be an interpreter'.

After Maria has introduced her narrative about Sabatelli, my subsequent invitation to the other participants in the group to contest or refuse to ratify the teacher's advice (by suggesting that there may be other potentially conflicting teacher advice) positions Maria as not speaking for the whole group.

Maria responds by describing Sabatelli as being the 'first teacher' (line 28) to have given the group the advice, thereby suggesting that there were others, which she subsequently confirms in her next turn (line 31). The intimation that the advice was in actual fact general (coming from more than one source), re-asserts her positioning of

Sabatelli as a valid informant and Maria as a valid judge of the importance of the advice for the group.

Silvia ratifies Maria's positioning of Sabatelli but extends this to include the group's experiences in the interpreting examination. Silvia positions the group as ratifying the efficacy of the teacher's advice in that context as well, indexed by the subject pronoun 'we' in

36 ...well we've seen I think all of us

37 seen that (.) it was the proper way to do (..) an exam like that

Silvia conflates the exam with the classroom interpreting experience, seeing the advice as being relevant to both situations and positioning the group participants as interpreter-students requiring advice to pass exams just as much as to become future professional interpreters.

When I ask the group if the advice did in actual fact help them in the exam, I ratify Silvia's positioning of them as students in need of help. Silvia immediately takes the next turn (line 43), shifting from depicting the group as a collective whole, with shared experiences of the exam, to individuals with different experiences, where the teacher's advice was not uniformly helpful. In the subsequent turn (line 45) Federico ratifies this positioning of the group as having varying experiences, by presenting his own exam success as a matter of luck, and thereby challenging the significance of Sabatelli's advice for the group as interpreter students in general.

5.4.3 Level 3 analysis: Connecting levels one and two to Discourses

Maria's narrative introduces a Discourse (through her reported speech of Sabatelli's advice to the class) that interpreters are *visible* and *agentive* in the interpreting event (see chapter one, section 1.4.2). *Visible* in that they are presented as physically interacting with their interlocutors in a social space, in both a visual and audial way. This emerges through Sabatelli's advice to the students not to cross their arms in an interpreting event, not to dress improperly, and to keep their voices loud and clear (as

they are ‘your instrument to work’). Sabatelli also portrays the interpreter as being *agentive*, meaning actively engaged in the interpreting process as an individual with the potential to alter the interpreting outcome through their choices of how to communicate between the different parties. This is highlighted by Sabatelli’s advice to the would-be interpreter to remember to have ‘control of the situation’, to ‘keep calm’ and to always be ‘polite’. The teacher’s reported speech that interpreters should not ‘beg for mercy’, also underlines the importance of actively avoiding passive positioning and reinforces the concept of being in control and directing the interlocutors from a position of power.

Silvia’s own comments about the advice, directed towards a successful exam result, sees the same agentive Discourse ratified (as the focus is on the interpreter-student staying calm and being in control). The consistent reiteration of this Discourse by the teacher in the class is suggested by both participants’ use of high frequency adverbs and phrases in their reported speech. Maria says that ‘every time’ they went to mediation classes

- 4 ... she was *always* saying
- 5 ok you have the control of the situation so: just remember to
- 6 keep calm

Silvia repeats the phrase ‘very often’ in her comment on the advice, ‘she highlighted it *very often*’ (line 30) and ‘she reminded *very often*’ (line 33). The consistent repetition of this advice (suggesting many mediation classes) suggests that the students were often perhaps doing the opposite (demonstrating that they were in fact not in control and not calm for example). The Discourse has evident weight and importance for Maria as well as for Silvia (albeit, in relation to the exams). However, Federico eventually refuses to ratify its general efficacy, by portraying the exam results ultimately as depending ‘on each and every one’s experiences’ and being ‘lucky’.

Although Maria only seems to invoke this Discourse in the final group interview (at the end of the research period), and only when the participants are directly requested to comment on teacher Discourses by myself, there are examples in her prior, second

one-to-one interview, that the Discourse is present in her talk about the identity of the interpreter. At one point she talks about the need for an interpreter not to be ‘shy’ and ‘not to be afraid to look the person in the eye’ going on to say

- 1 because maybe you know that you’re the focus point in everything
- 2 (..) so everything (.) is (.) ruled by you

(Maria 2 interview. See appendix A: p.500, lines 949 -951)

Her comment that the interpreter is the ‘focus point in everything’ (line 1) and that ‘everything is ruled’ (line 2) by the interpreter has clear links to the same Discourse in the group two interview described here (sections 5.4 -5.4.3 above).

Further on in the Maria’s prior second one-to-one interview, when she is discussing the level of language proficiency required to be an interpreter she says

- 1 ...you can be an interpreter even though you don’t know the language
- 2 perfectly if you don’t understand a word you can ask (.) because you have
- 3 the power you have (.) the control of the situation (.) yeah

(Maria 2 interview. See appendix A: p.509, lines 1272 – 1277)

In this extract we see a clear word-for-word reference to the Discourse in the second group interview, interpreters are visible and agentive as they can ask when they don’t know a word, and because they have the power and are in ‘control of the situation’ (line 3). Moreover, Maria’s positioning of the interpreter as not needing to speak the language perfectly, contrasts with her earlier assertion in the first group interview session (see section 5.2.4) where the interpreter is described as needing to perfectly understand and perfectly speak a language (except for ‘one or two errors’). This repositioning by Maria might be seen as having been influenced by the teacher’s Discourse which places more emphasis on human interaction than linguistic competence (see chapter 6, section 6.4.1, for further analysis of this repositioning in relation to native speaker models).

5.4.4 The Discourse of the interpreter as being agentive and visible

The Discourse that interpreters should be agentive and visible in the interpreting event is raised in Maria's narrative in the second group interview then and ratified by Silvia (although she shifts the focus to student-interpreters in the interpreting examination). Although the other participants do not challenge it (their silence implying an implicit acceptance) it is not picked up on or elaborated on in any other talk throughout the research data. This suggests that whilst the Discourse appears to have relevancy for Maria, evidenced in her prior talk as well (her second one-to-one interview, see section 5.4.3), it has had little influence on the other participants' view of the interpreter identity.

As there are only a few examples of this Discourse (of the interpreter as a visible and agentive entity), it is notable precisely because of its general absence in the data, suggesting a more dominant Discourse is pervasive, of the interpreter as a language expert (see section 5.2.4), dependent foremost on his/her cognitive and linguistic skills (see section 1.4.2).

When looking at the literature that is available to students in the institution, the emphasis for aspiring interpreters coming into the department for the first time appears to be principally based on language acquisition (see section 5.2.5). The required resources for becoming a successful interpreter beyond this however are very unclear, and almost no reference is made anywhere to the actual role the interpreter plays in the interpreting event. Students consequently, would appear to be very dependent on the interpreter-teacher's portrayal of that role in the classroom. This is further borne out by a lack of institutional guidance on the curriculum being taught in the first cycle degree, as testifiable by my own experiences in the institution, with complete autonomy being given to the teacher to organise his/her courses. No course plans are required, and teachers are only obliged to publish the contents of their courses on the departmental website, but these are often very broad and general descriptions with

little to no reference to interpreting theory or the role of the interpreter, as the following example from a first year course description shows³⁸

Course contents

The *Mediazione* module will be divided into two parts: Part 1: rephrasing from Italian into Italian, English into English, English into Italian and Italian into English; exercises based on various materials regarding cultural aspects of English-speaking countries and vocabulary related to specific topics (as described in Part 2); Part 2: simulations of interpreter-mediated exchanges between English native speakers and Italian native speakers in daily contexts (at the airport, at the restaurant, etc.) and analysis/discussion of verbal and nonverbal behaviour, and language registers.

What is particularly significant in this course description is apart from a cursory reference to ‘cultural aspects’ and ‘nonverbal behaviour’, the emphasis appears to be on language. Interpreter-students are expected to engage in ‘rephrasing’ between languages (Italian and English), and carry out simulations of interpreting between English and Italian ‘native speakers’ (see chapter 6 for a consideration of native speaker models in the institution).

The Discourse invoked in Maria’s narrative (section 5.4) is linked to debates in the academy about how much interpreters’ identities/selves play a part in the *interpreted communicative event* (ICE). This Discourse maintains that ‘through the self the interpreter exercises agency and power, which materialize through different behaviours that alter the outcomes of the ICE’ (Angelelli, 2012: 245). It is a Discourse which sees the interpreter as a visible, interactive agent, and contrasts with Discourses that position the interpreter as a ‘ghost’ (Gambal, 1998), an almost invisible player whose presence should be negligible in the ICE, or a ‘conduit’ (Reddy, 1979), a

³⁸ Course description 2014, see <http://www.unibo.it/en/teaching/course-unit-catalogue/course-unit?annoAccademico=2014&idComponenteAF=376067>

channeller of languages, (see chapter one, section 1.4.2 for a discussion of these Discourses in relation to community interpreting).

5.5 Conclusions

What emerges from the narratives analysed in this chapter is how the participants position themselves in relation to teacher Discourses about the identity of the professional interpreter. Matteo and Marta's narratives present very different images of interpreters. In Matteo's narrative (section 5.2) the emphasis appears to be on the interpreter as a language expert, foregrounding linguistic and cognitive skills and backgrounding cultural and interpersonal skills. The emphasis on these language skills appears to be shared by many of the participants, as exemplified by other individual and group narratives across the data (see section 5.2.4). Marta's narrative however introduces the image of the interpreter as being much more engaged with his/her interlocutors in terms of physical presence (appearance, gestures, voice) and active engagement (controlling, staying calm, being polite). The Discourse that emerges in Marta's narrative then is that an interpreter is visible and agentive whereas in Matteo's he/she appears to be much more invisible and non-agentive, more of a conduit of language than a human physical presence. Although the other participants appear to ratify the Discourse in Marta's narrative, the absence of it elsewhere in the data suggests that is not of primary importance to them. In chapter 6, I shall be looking more closely at the specific role of languages in my participants' construction of the professional interpreter's identity.

Another Discourse, which emerged from Matteo's narrative, was the way in which the institution appears to position itself in the 'education market', part of neoliberal Discourses, which identify a growing marketization in higher education (see section 5.2.7). Moscato's talk about Sslmit students having 'talent' by reason of them gaining entrance to the institution was reinforced by opening day narratives (Marta and Sara, section 5.2.6) of students being told they were the best because they had been accepted by the institution (implicitly implying that it is the best). This Discourse was shown to cause tensions among the participants in that it implied an assured career path to

becoming interpreters, and an unstated expectation that Sslmit students should always perform as though they were the best (an undefined benchmark).

Finally, Matteo's narrative also showed how a teacher with high amounts of 'symbolic capital' might introduce their own personal and individual discourses into the classroom quite successfully. Moscato's discourse that interpreting is stressing was seen to have detrimental effects on some of the participants' perceptions of the professional interpreter identity, causing them to question whether that career was in actual fact the one they wished to pursue (e.g. Rosa and Sara).

As mentioned previously, in the next chapter I go on to consider the role of language more closely (particularly in relation to native speaker models), and how it emerges through my participants' narratives on the resources required to become successful professional interpreters.

Chapter 6

Data analysis

6.1 The interpreter and the *native speaker* - Introduction

In the following chapter I will look at the specific role that language plays as a resource in the participants' perceptions of a professional interpreter's identity.

The participants' focus on language skills as being paramount to becoming interpreters was briefly explored in chapter 5 (sections 5.2.4 – 5.2.5), but in this chapter I develop this focus to examine the concept of the interpreter as a figure with a 'native speaker' command of the languages he/she is interpreting between. In this chapter then I analyse narratives that appear to show how my participants struggle with the 'native speaker model' (see section 6.4.3 for a description of native speaker models in language teaching and learning) in relation to their own identities as interpreter-students, and how they affirm, challenge or refute such models over the period of their first year in the institution. Some of the examples from the data I cited in chapter 5 (in sections 5.2.4, and 5.4.3), re-emerge in this analysis (see section 6.4.1) but with a different perspective, specifically on the 'level' of language expressed by the participants as being required in order to be able to claim an interpreter identity.

6.2 Narrative on becoming as good as native speakers: The 'Rutland' narrative

In the following sections (6.2 – 6.4) I analyse a narrative that emerged in the first group interview and re-emerged further on in the same interview. To begin with I look at its first appearance through the lens of narrative positioning analysis, at levels one and two (sections 6.2.1 - 6.2.2). I then turn to its reoccurrence, to apply the same analysis again (sections 6.3 – 6.3.2). The second narrative is however complicated, in that there is also an embedded narrative present within it (defined as a narrative that

changes scene, characters and action but is somehow made relevant to the narrative it emerges in). I therefore analyse this embedded narrative separately (sections 6.3.2.1 – 6.3.2.2), again applying a level one and two analysis, before moving to a third level analysis (section 6.4) which draws all the narratives together in an examination of the common Discourses at work.

In the first group interview Rosa positions herself as being more disadvantaged than the other students, in that her native language (Persian) makes it particularly difficult to become an interpreter in an Italian institution, where Italian is taken to be the native language of the majority of students and all interpreting courses are from Italian into another language and vice-versa.

In the same interview, Silvia refuses to ratify Rosa's positioning of herself as being disadvantaged, by claiming that non-native students can learn to speak as well, if not better, than native speaker Italians. She introduces the character of the English professor, Rutland, as an example of someone who 'speaks Italian better than us'.

In the interview I pick up on Silvia's assertion that Rutland knows her language better than herself, requesting a specific episode as an example. The following extract (lines 1 – 33, below) shows her response, where she introduces a narrative of her experiences in the first class with the teacher, which is then developed and co-constructed together with the other participants. I firstly present the whole transcript and then go on to analyse it using narrative positioning analysis (sections 6.2.1 – 6.2.2).

- 1 Alan: can I just ask you when you said that he knows your language better
2 than you (.) can you give me a specific episode where
3 Silvia: well first lesson he was [using
4 Fed: [but did we have one?
5 Silvia: yeah ((both laugh)) (.) well the only lesson sorry (..) ok the fir- the
6 only and first lesson we had with him a:: he was speaking and we're
7 like oh my:: [go:d ((tone of amazement))
8 Maria: [he said
9 something like [erm:

- 10 Silvia: [em:: (.) u:: ((Italian pronunciation of letter))
- 11 Maria: utilizzando in quest' er:: utilizzando in un determinato contesto per poter
- 12 rendere tali ((Italian phrase))
- 13 Silvia: hm ye- yeah
- 14 ((Federico laughs))
- 15 Maria: which was something like=
- 16 Silvia: =pew ((sound associated with something that impresses))
- 17 Maria: I understand I never use (.) I use tizio e cosa e:: ((Lower register Italian words))
- 18 Silvia: exactly (..)
- 19 ((general laughter))
- 20 he he speaks in a proper way
- 21 Maria: yeah
- 22 Silvia: as it should be (.) for a- an interpreter it should be that way but we don't
- 23 Maria: and he's a [translator
- 24 Fed: [why don't you think
- 25 we talk we talk better I mean I hope I talk better than the: and and I hope
- 26 (xxxxxxxxxxx) a normal er: you know er::: (.) m: a builder from erm:: (..)
- 27 Silvia: I'm not at [exeter
- 28 Fed: [exeter
- 29 I hope I have a better English than a a m: with a more norma:l grammar
- 30 Silvia: (well i)
- 31 Fed: than a normal people in England (.) [because
- 32 Silvia: [well probably it's because
- 33 Fed: because we studied

(Group 1 interview. Recording times: 00:44:38 – 00:46:01. See appendix A: p.440, lines 1141 - 1187)

6.2.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

Analysing this narrative through the lens of narrative positioning, we see that Silvia introduces the scene as the ‘first lesson’ with Rutland (line 3). This is briefly challenged by Federico, who questions if it was in actual fact a lesson, before Silvia continues with her narrative. Silvia introduces all the students as a collective character in the scene, indexed by the use of the subject pronoun ‘we’ (‘the first lesson we had with him’, line 6). Through reported speech she then positions the students as being very impressed at Rutland’s Italian, ‘we’re like oh my:: god’ (lines 6-7), represented prosodically by a tone of amazement.

Maria takes up the next turn (line 8), as a character in the same scene. She ratifies Silvia’s positioning of the group as being impressed by the teacher’s Italian, by reporting the actual words Rutland said in Italian to the class (lines 11-12). Maria’s use of reported speech positions Rutland as speaking Italian better than she does, indexed by her giving apparently little social status to the Italian words she would normally use instead (‘I use tizio e cosa’, line 17). The general group laughter that follows this (line 19), suggests that the other participants are aligning with Maria’s positioning of Rutland’s Italian as being better than their own. Silvia then takes the next turn, further positioning Rutland as speaking Italian ‘in a proper way’ (line 20), and as ‘it should be’ for an interpreter (line 22). She then positions all the students (apparently including her fellow participants in the interview) as not doing the same (‘but we don’t’, line 22). This positions all her fellow students then (both in the narrative event and the narrative-telling event) as not conforming to the language requisites of an interpreter.

Maria and Silvia’s co-constructed narrative of Rutland’s performance in Italian positions him as a model for students’ aspiring to become interpreters. He is portrayed as speaking even better than native-speaker Italians do (i.e. Maria and Silvia), and for Silvia this is presented as a goal that should be shared by everyone in their own foreign language learning, anyone that is who wishes to become an interpreter.

Federico comes in on the next turn (line 24) to interrupt the narrative however, challenging how Maria and Silvia have positioned Rutland, by refusing to accept that students do not speak as well as him in their own foreign languages, ‘why don’t you think we talk better’ (lines 24-25). Federico’s talk is not about his own native Italian (which he may or may not accept as being better than Rutland’s) but his English (the language he is learning to become an interpreter). This is implicit by his reference to speaking better than a native speaking English ‘builder’ (line 26) and /or ‘normal people in England’ (line 31), as he describes them. Federico is therefore positioning Rutland as speaking Italian better than *normal* Italians but claiming the same status for himself in English, as he too speaks English better than *normal* English people.

6.2.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

Centring on the positioning going on in the narrative-telling event, we see both Silvia and Maria’s joint narrative as positioning the group as aspiring to a native-like level (see section 6.4.3) if they want to become interpreters, epitomised by the character of Rutland. Their description of Rutland however positions him as being exceptional (indexed by their prosodic signals of amazement at his Italian, lines 7 and 16), and how the group should speak their own foreign languages but are unable to do so (evidenced by Silvia’s comment, ‘it should be that way but we don’t’, line 22). When Maria further attempts to position Rutland as an exceptional example for the group, saying that he is not even a teacher of interpreting but translation (suggesting that he does not even require such high levels of spoken Italian for the profession he teaches), Federico comes in to challenge this.

Federico ratifies their positioning of the group as aspiring to a native-like, or even better than native-like level, by *normalising* it. He maintains that people who study languages are expected to speak them better than native speakers who do not, describing his own English as being better than the English of native speakers who have not studied it as he has (line 33), at least those from implicitly suggested *working class* backgrounds, as indexed by his choice of ‘builders’ as an example (which also appears in turn to index low levels of education). This normalisation can be seen as an

attempt by Federico to re-position Rutland as unexceptional, but in doing so Federico positions the group, along with Silvia and Maria, as expecting to attain very high native-like levels of linguistic competence through their studies.

The narrative of Rutland's first lesson re-emerges further on in the interview (see section 6.3, below) which I now go on to analyse at a first and second level again, before looking at the wider Discourses that emerge through both narratives in section 6.4.

6.3 Second occurrence of the Rutland narrative.

In the stretch of dialogue following the first narrative about Rutland (see section 6.2), the participants engage in a discussion about their own native Italian and the communication problems they experience at times based on lexis derived from non-standard usage (described as 'dialect' by the participants). Drawing from this discussion I asked the group

is that why you find you found professor rutland so impressive?

(Group 1 interview. See appendix A: p.421, lines 1330 – 1331)

suggesting that the participants had found the teacher's Italian so impressive because he used a more standard form perhaps. Federico's reaction to this question is to affirm Rutland's Italian as being 'really good', but adding that he is not particularly impressed by it as

he's teaching in italy I don't see why he shouldn't

(Ibid: lines 1337 - 1338)

Federico refuses again then to ratify Silvia and Maria's earlier positioning of Rutland as being exceptional, but shifts his earlier focus from people who 'study language' to

people who live and work in the country where that language is spoken. Federico continues to attempt to *normalise* the character of Rutland then by maintaining that he should speak Italian well as he teaches in Italy, as indeed all teachers teaching in Italy ‘should talk a good Italian’.

I then invited Matteo (who had not spoken for some time) to say something. The following is a transcript of the dialogue, which I will go on to analyse through the lens of Narrative positioning (specifically levels one and two).

- 1 Alan: so m- matteo
2 Matteo: bu- but even erm: he’s erm: pronunciation (.) is perfect
3 Silvia: ah
4 Maria: yeah he doesn’t even have an accent
5 Matteo: yes
6 Silvia: well a little [bit bu-
7 Matteo: [he doesn’t have an
8 english accent
9 ((two or three voices overlapping))
10 I couldn’t say he was an an english teacher I thoug- thought he was he was (..)
11 italian and not an english teacher (.) and it was amazing (.) and I: think
12 if just not a method of grammar cos I’m: well erm: (..) you know this
13 is my second bachelor degree and I have a friend of mine erm: who studied
14 with me at the university of rome (.) em: well she has the highest level
15 possible of japanese proficiency (.) she’s amazing an:d she has been in japan
16 fo:r er:: three years and she just told me that well (.)
17 if you want to learn a language
18 (.) just that well if you want to learn a language just go to the country
19 and forget your grammar
20 Silvia: hm
21 Matteo: just forget your grammar
22 Maria: yeah
23 Matteo: live there and then you will be: (.) proficient in that language (..)
24 and I think it’s amazing it’s just not a matter of grammar

25 it's not a matter it's I think it's a matter of use of the language
26 Silvia: [yeah but even the grammar
27 Matteo: [(xxxxx)
28 Silvia: [because
29 Alan: [could I just ask
30 (.) you said when you were at rutland's lesson
31 Matteo: hm m
32 Alan: and th- then you thought he was italian
33 Matteo: yes
34 Alan: can you tell me (.) how that episode developed? (...)
35 Fed: heh talk in english ((general laughter))
36 Matteo: er::: no: well ((silvia talks in background)) he said just a few things that
37 well (.) then the pronunciation of those few words well could er:
38 well I said ok he's english [but
39 Maria: [ehm
40 Alan: sorry
41 Maria: I'd said [that
42 Alan: [can I just
43 Maria: he could have been foreign not english yeah I was
44 [th- there's (something weird)
45 Matteo: [yes foreign
46 Maria: but I wouldn't be able to say where he comes from
47 Fed: if we didn't know he was an english teacher
48 Maria: yeah
49 ((overlap of voices))
50 Alan: but I'm not quite following how it worked how this thing developed
51 I mean he spoke so good so well
52 Silvia: well he started speaking in italian
53 Alan: ri:ght
54 Silvia: and we we're like (.) wo:w because it was a really good italian
55 Alan: yah
56 Silvia: we expect to er I don't know we expect a: (.) I don't (.)
57 a good italian I I don't say a bad italian but not that good

58 I mean it's more than a native speaker (..) because I
 59 don't speak like that ((small laugh)) even [the pronunciation
 60 Fed: [he's
 61 teaching us mediation
 62 [he's teaching us=
 63 Maria: [= (xxx)=
 64 Fed: =to talk like we don- we don't have any i- italian accent
 65 why shouldn't we expect him to have the same
 66 ((overlapping talk with maria))
 67 Silvia: I wasn't expecting that (.) oh come on
 68 Maria: he's teaching translation
 69 Silvia: (1.0) yes (come on)
 70 Fed: still ((laughs)) (.) no I think it's we have a lot of good teachers
 71 an- and I think the English ones a: are:: the one who are (.)
 72 and it's come back to russia I think it's a th- the one who
 73 are pushing more to er: (..) know italian for example and I
 74 it's what I look for in my erm studying er:
 75 Silvia: well I didn't expect that right
 76 Fed: [my development
 77 Silvia: [I didn't expect that right
 78 Fed: because I want to be like that
 79 Silvia: ok
 80 Fed: that's why [I: (xxx)
 81 Silvia: [me too
 82 I'm not saying that
 83 Alan: how did you feel and think looking back to matteo
 84 you started this how did you feel and
 85 think when you heard his italian (..) personally
 86 Matteo: (...) I want to be like him ((general laughter))
 87 in Japanese in english in german yes cos i:
 88 (.) I really want to become an interpreter (.) cos i:: m:: (.)
 89 I like the this job I:: (.)

(Group 1 interview. Recording time: 00:50:22 – 00:54:14. See appendix A: p.446,

lines 1346 - 1458)

6.3.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

In the narrative event, the scene of the first lesson with Rutland is re-introduced by Matteo, and the entire narrative is taken up by a complex positioning and re-positioning of Rutland's accent in comparison to an Italian native speaker.

Matteo initially positions the character of Rutland as having 'perfect' Italian pronunciation (line 2), so much so that he couldn't tell that he was an 'English' teacher but thought he was Italian instead (lines 10-11). Maria ratifies this positioning when she says he didn't 'even have an accent' (line 4), presumably an English accent, although Silvia challenges this positioning partially by suggesting that he had a 'little accent' (line 6).

Matteo then introduces another narrative, an *embedded narrative* (see section 6.2 for a definition), which I shall return to in a separate analysis later (see sections 6.3.2.1 – 6.3.2.2).

Interrupting this embedded narrative (line 29) I draw Matteo back to the Rutland narrative by asking him to tell me about the classroom experience again, when he thought the teacher was Italian. On returning to the narrative however Matteo appears to contradict his earlier positioning of the teacher when he says 'well I said ok he's english' (lines 38), re-positioning Rutland now as having less than perfect Italian pronunciation.

Maria does not ratify the change in Matteo's positioning of Rutland's Italian however, as sounding English, but shifts from her previous position ('he doesn't have an accent') to describing it as 'foreign not English' (line 43), which Matteo then agrees with (line 45). Maria goes on to qualify this assertion by describing it as an accent she '...wouldn't be able to say where he comes from' (line 46), which Federico in turn

agrees with, although with the added caveat ‘if we didn’t know he was an english teacher’ (line 47).

After I ask the group for further clarification about Rutland’s accent, Silvia re-establishes the initial classroom scene in which Rutland first spoke (line 52). She positions the whole class again as being amazed on hearing Rutland speak for the first time, indexed by her use of the reported word ‘wow’ (line 54), with a prosodic overlay indicating something unexpected, and echoing her earlier reported class reaction, ‘oh my god’, in the first narrative (section 6.2, line 7). Silvia positions herself and the class as expecting ‘a good Italian’ from the teacher but ‘not that good’ (line 57), going on (again as in the first narrative) to re-affirm Rutland’s Italian as being

58 more than a native speaker (..) because I
59 don’t speak like that

Silvia positions herself therefore as a ‘native speaker’ and Rutland as speaking better than her.

In terms of the narrative event then, there is a complex series of positionings and repositionings of Rutland’s Italian accent in the same classroom scene as described in the first narrative (section 6.2). The participants’ focus therefore has shifted from grammar and lexis to pronunciation. I now look at the positioning among the participants in the narrative-telling event.

6.3.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

Matteo’s narrative emerges from talk about the students’ use of dialect, where I re-introduce the earlier narrative about Rutland by suggesting that their amazement at his performance in Italian was due to a more standard usage of the language. I position Matteo as a potential narrator then by referring to the earlier narrative and inviting him to talk. Matteo accepts this positioning by initiating the narrative, but shifts the earlier focus on Rutland’s lexis and grammar to his ‘perfect’ pronunciation, suggesting the

latter as being more important for the group (line 2). This is ratified by Maria who affirms that ‘he doesn’t even have an accent’ (line 4), and by Silvia, although tentatively, by describing Rutland as having a little accent (line 6).

Matteo then introduces another, embedded narrative (which I will analyse in the following sections, 6.3.2.1- 6.3.2.2), after which I position myself as a teacher and the participants as students, exercising my institutional power and position as a teacher to decide what is relevant to the group discussion. I invite Matteo to return to his earlier narrative by recalling Matteo’s earlier affirmation that Rutland sounded Italian (lines 30–32).

Matteo’s attempt to alter his initial positioning of Rutland as speaking with a perfect Italian accent, suggesting now that it was identifiably English, is met with resistance by the other participants. Rosa, Maria and Federico are not willing to undermine the elevated status of Rutland’s native-speaker accomplishments, showing evident appreciation for his accent by way of its being ‘unplaceable’ (or at least not English in origin), if not perfectly Italian.

Silvia also challenges Matteo’s positioning further, re-positioning Rutland not just as a perfect Italian speaker but actually as being ‘more than a native speaker’ (line 58), even better than herself. Federico challenges this reaffirmation of Rutland as being linguistically exceptional yet again (as in the first narrative). Federico attempts to *normalise* Rutland by positioning him as expecting students to speak English without an Italian accent, and the group consequently as accepting the same from him in Italian (lines 60-65). Maria challenges Federico however by positioning Rutland as not being interested in oral production, as he is a ‘translator’ not an interpreter (line 68). Federico’s reaction to this seems to come almost as a final confession of a hidden goal to be like Rutland, ‘because I want to be like him’ (line 78).

Federico’s attempt to explain his resistance to elevating Rutland as a model for the group appears in the following phrase ‘that’s why i...’ (line 80), but this is cut short by Silvia’s own alignment with him as she states that she also wants to be like Rutland,

‘me too’ (line 81). When I return to Matteo to elicit his thoughts and feelings on hearing Rutland again, he too aligns with Federico and Silvia when he says

86 I want to be like him ((general laughter))
87 in Japanese in english in german yes cos i:
88 (.) I really want to become an interpreter

Federico, Silvia and Matteo thus position Rutland as a model for the group if they want to become interpreters, but at the same time suggest that achieving such a goal is far from easy as Rutland is positioned as being exceptional.

I now turn to analyse Matteo’s embedded narrative (lines 12 – 25), again through analysis at levels one and two (see sections 6.3.2.1 – 6.3.2.2). I then turn finally to a level three analysis, which draws the narratives together in relation to other narratives across the whole data, and to wider Discourses (see section 6.4).

6.3.2.1 Matteo’s embedded narrative - Level 1 analysis

As previously stated (section 6.2), I take an embedded narrative to be a narrative within a narrative, where there is a change of setting, characters and action, but it is somehow relative and connected to the other.

In Matteo’s embedded narrative, the scene is described as the university of Rome where Matteo studied Oriental languages for his first degree, (see chapter 3, section 3.3.1 for a brief biographical outline) and the character he introduces is described as ‘a friend of mine’ (line 13), whose level of Japanese is positioned as being at ‘the highest level possible’ (lines 14-15). As with the character of Rutland (see section 6.2), Matteo’s friend is also described as being ‘amazing’ (line 15), referring it seems to her command of the Japanese language. Matteo then gives some background information about his friend, highlighting in particular her three-year period living in Japan (lines 15-16), and introduces her reported speech

- 17 if you want to learn a language
 18 (.) just that well if you want to learn a language just go to the country
 19 and forget your grammar

The reported speech serves to position his friend as a valid informant about how to achieve the ‘highest level possible’ (lines 14-15) in a foreign language, which is presented as living in the country of origin and forgetting your grammar. Matteo’s use of the zero conditional (the use of present tenses in both clauses) presents his friend’s advice as factual and a general truth.

6.3.2.2 Matteo’s embedded narrative - Level 2 analysis

The narrative is embedded in another narrative, which is about Rutland’s perfect pronunciation in Italian. Matteo introduces the embedded narrative after an affirmation that speaking like Rutland is ‘not a method of grammar’ (line 12), making the narrative relative in this context. He positions the group as ratifying this statement, as his friend’s advice to him in the narrative event (lines 17-19) is followed by his own statement (using the same imperative forms of the verbs as in the reported speech, ‘forget’ and ‘live’) which seems to be addressed to everyone present in the narrative-telling event,

- 21 just forget your grammar...
 ...
 23 live there and then you will be: (.) proficient in that language

Silvia and Maria in fact appear to see this as being directed at them, as they both engage with the statement. Maria ratifies Matteo’s positioning of his friend as giving good and relevant advice to the group by her affirmative ‘yeah’ (line 22), and Silvia appears to do the same although signalling some doubts by qualifying her own affirmative ‘yeah’ (line 26) with ‘but even the grammar’, which suggests that she wants to say something more in relation to grammar, although this is not allowed to develop due to Matteo’s interruption (line 27). The purpose of Matteo’s narrative then

seems to be an extolment to study abroad if students want to have an ‘amazing’ level of language, which also positions the institution as not being capable of helping students fulfil that goal. Matteo therefore appears to position the group as not expecting to reach a native-like level while they are studying in the institution, an assertion that seems to be collectively acknowledged by the other participants.

Interrupting Matteo’s embedded narrative, I draw Matteo back to his earlier narrative about Rutland. On returning to his first impression again however, Matteo appears to contradict his earlier comment when he says ‘well I said ok he’s english’ (line 38). Why Matteo decides to do this might be due to Federico’s comment before he responds

35 Fed: heh talk in english ((general laughter))

Federico’s imperative ‘talk in english’ is directed at Matteo, although he has been speaking in English throughout the interview. Federico appears to be positioning Matteo’s English as not being very good, not at the level of Rutland’s Italian, and reinforcing Federico’s earlier point that the participant’s need to spend time in a native speaker country (working and/or studying there) in order to be that good. He may also be reacting to Matteo’s narrative which claims that in order to speak a language perfectly one must live in the country, something which Matteo himself has not done. Matteo’s reaction to this appears to be to position himself therefore as a native speaking Italian who can identify non-native speakers, as good as they may be (i.e. Rutland).

Having analysed all the narratives until now using levels one and two, I now go on to a level three analysis (section 6.4 below), connecting them to wider Discourses about native-speaker models in relation to becoming an interpreter, and then look at similar patterns across all my data (section 6.4.1). In section 6.4.2 I look at how such Discourses emerge specifically in the institution, and then to wider issues of native speaker models in language teaching and learning in general (section 6.4.3).

6.4 Level 3 analysis: The native speaker Discourse in the Rutland narratives

What appears to emerge in the narratives about Rutland is a Discourse that speaking like a ‘native’ is what is required in order to become an interpreter. In the first narrative, Silvia describes Rutland’s Italian as ‘how an interpreter should speak’ (section 6.2, see transcript, line 22) and positions the group as aspiring to this as ‘it should be that way but we don’t’ (Ibid). In the second narrative Silvia positions Rutland as speaking Italian even better ‘than a native speaker’ (section 6.3, see transcript, line 58), furthering her earlier suggestion that the group should talk as he does, and suggesting a native-like model as the group’s ultimate goal.

The two main narratives about Rutland focus on two aspects of native speaker speech. The first narrative centres on Rutland’s grammar and lexis, highlighted by Maria’s reported speech of his talk in class, contrasting it to her own. Whereas Rutland is positioned as using a very literary form of Italian (with higher social status) Maria positions herself as using a much more prosaic form of the language, ‘I use tizio e cosa’ (section 6.2, see transcript, line 17). The second narrative focuses principally on native-like pronunciation, where the participants debate how difficult it was to identify Rutland as English by his accent in Italian. This difficulty seems to raise Rutland’s standing among the group, evidenced by Matteo and Maria’s comments, which are delivered with evident appreciation, ‘he’s pronunciation is perfect’, ‘he didn’t even have an accent’ (section 6.3, see transcript, lines 2 and 4, respectively). Matteo’s embedded narrative shifts the focus from learning a language to a native-like level in the institution, to the country where it is spoken, maintaining the native-like language goal for the group but positioning it as not being attainable within the institution itself.

In sum, the Discourse that emerges then from these narratives is that native-like levels in a language are *interpreter levels*. Attaining such levels within the institution however is questioned by some of the participants, causing tension in the group. Federico and Matteo both position students as needing to go abroad in order to reach those levels. Federico’s attempt to normalise Rutland’s accomplishments in Italian is based on studying the language (as emerges in the first narrative) but also living and working in the country where the language is spoken (a development of his argument,

that emerges in the second narrative). In his embedded narrative, Matteo is even more direct in advocating living abroad, students are positioned as needing to forget grammar and just ‘live there and then you will be proficient in that language’ (line 23), a positioning that the group appears to accept by not challenging it. This assertion, that students need to forget their grammar and live in the country, questions the possibility of the group of ever reaching their native-like goal within the classrooms of the institution, placing it outside the walls of formal education and in the *real world*.

The native-like benchmark for linguistic competence in order to become an interpreter can be seen across the data, albeit with changes in the participants’ positioning towards it. I now go on to give more examples.

6.4.1 (Re)positioning towards native-like models of speech across the data

Going back to an earlier stage in the first group interview (before the Rutland narratives) we see the Discourse of *native speaker levels being interpreter levels* emerging in the participants’ talk. Some extracts have already been given as examples of the Discourse of *interpreters are language experts* (Chapter 5, section 5.2.4), but I re-analyse them here from the perspective of the native-speaker Discourse.

Matteo brings up the issue of fluency and speaking skills, complaining that he is still making too many mistakes in both his English and German. When I ask him what he means by this, he responds in the following way

- 1 Matteo: er::: well cos I think that at the end of the of the:: of the university at the
- 2 end of the sslmit i: I just have to speak (2.0) per- perfectly (.) er but I have
- 3 to speak a perfect language (.) first language and second language cos we
- 4 won’t I think we won’t become to become interpreters or translators and so
- 5 em: (.) I:: I want to become an interpreter and I think that you just need a
- 6 proficiency that is (.) eh quite amazing one near to a mother tongue level

(Group 1 interview. Recording time: 00:29:21 – 00:30:02. See appendix A: p.428, lines 724 – 734)

In Matteo's narrative, he introduces his character as someone in a future hypothetical story event, set at the end of his studies at Sslmit ('at the end of the of the:: of the university at the end of the sslmit', lines 1-2). He describes his character (and the other students, indexed by the use of the plural pronoun 'we' in 'we won't...', line 4) as having to speak 'perfectly' (line 2) both in his first and second languages (line 3) or he won't become an interpreter.

Matteo then returns to the narrative-telling event, where he affirms that he wants to become an interpreter ('I want to become an interpreter', line 5). He positions himself and the group as doubting that they can become interpreters however, unless they reach an 'amazing' level 'near to a mother tongue level' (line 6).

The Discourse of attaining native speaker proficiency in order to become an interpreter emerges here too then, but it is also framed by the limitations of time, as Matteo sees this linguistic attainment framed within the three-year degree cycle, the time it takes to get to the 'end of sslmit' (line 2), (see section 6.6 for an analysis of the issue of time in participant narratives).

A little further on, still in the first group interview (but before the Rutland narratives again), I ask Maria what she thinks about the idea of an interpreter being perfect in a language. She responds in the following manner

- 1 Maria: (.) it does have at least the grammar (.)
- 2 Alan: hm: wh what do we mean by perfect?
- 3 Maria: I mean that I can perfectly understand and perfectly speak even
- 4 with (.) couple of mistakes that's fine but I have to be able to
- 5 perfectly understand whatever they're saying

(Group 1 interview. Recording time: 00:30:48 – 00:31:09. See appendix A: p.429, lines 753 - 759)

At first Maria, like Matteo, affirms the need for perfection but qualifies it as being ‘at least the grammar’ (line 1). When I ask her what she means by ‘perfect’ (line 2), Maria introduces a future hypothetical narrative as well, where her character is an interpreter who ‘can perfectly understand and perfectly speak even with (.) couple of mistakes’ (line 4), changing the emphasis from grammar to the need to ‘perfectly understand’ and ‘perfectly speak’. To *Perfectly understand* however is repeated again in the same turn (lines 3 and 5), suggesting that it is in actual fact the most important think for Maria.

The continuation of Maria’s turn sees a further development of her character in her future hypothetical narrative of being an interpreter with another shift in emphasis, making no further reference to grammar, but to the importance of accent

- 1 Maria: I prefer not to feel my Italian accent when I am speaking in English or
- 2 when I am speaking in Russian (.) because (.) it wouldn’t be a proper
- 3 failure failure but (.) it wouldn’t be a great work

(Group 1 interview. Recording time: 00:31:34 – 00:31: 43. See appendix A:
p.429, lines 769 - 774)

As in the first narrative about Rutland (section 6.2), which follows on from this, Maria sees not having an Italian accent as being important when speaking another language, having an Italian accent is described as not being a ‘proper failure’ (lines 2-3), but not being part of a ‘great work’ (line 3), (a great interpreting job, presumably).

In Maria’s second interview, towards the end of her first academic year, I ask her again if she still thinks that interpreters need to be almost perfect in the languages they are studying. Maria’s response shows a shift in position however (see section 5.4.3), as she expresses a realisation that a native-like goal may not be attainable or even necessary.

- 1 Maria: =ah I'm not really sure of that of it now I think it's just em: (..) (greed)
- 2 that is talking
- 3 Alan: sorry
- 4 Maria: greed
- 5 Alan: gree::d
- 6 Maria: yeah (.) I'd lo:ve to have a perfect accent and to be able to switch
- 7 between different accents (.) and to be able to: (..) use a language a
- 8 foreign language the way I use mine
- 9 Alan: hm m
- 10 Maria: so switching and changing and going from (..) one meaning to another
- 11 (.) that would be great but I don't think it's (.) that neces- necessary to
- 12 be a perfect interpreter you can be an interpreter even though you don't
- 13 know the language perfectly ...

(Maria 2 interview. Recording time: 00:51:54 – 00:52:35. See appendix A:
p.534, lines 1255 – 1273)

Maria describes her initial aim of learning a language 'perfectly' as being a consequence of her 'greed' (line 4), where greed suggests wanting more than one actually requires or is able to acquire. The native speaker aspiration expressed in her first group interview is no longer evident, she does not use modal verbs of obligation, such as *have to* as before, but rather says *I'd love* (line 6), suggesting that it would be desirable but not necessary for her. Maria's emphasis on the importance of not having an Italian accent has also become less essential from her first group interview, where it was described by her as almost being a sign of 'failure' as an interpreter. By the end of her first year then Maria seems to have repositioned herself towards the native speaker Discourse, where 'you can be an interpreter even though you don't know the language perfectly' (lines 12-13).

In his first group interview, Federico, like Maria, also places emphasis on 'understanding' his foreign language (Russian) 'perfectly', but unlike Matteo he does not see speaking it to the level of *perfection* as being attainable in three years.

1 Fed: but my expectation is from Russian to Italian as an interpreter or in- in- interpr-
 2 as a translator o:r whatever (.) so yes I (..) that's what I focus on for perfection I
 3 want to understand perfectly and er:: m: of course if I have studied for five years
 4 and then (.) I don't know how many later Russia I go to Russia...

(Group 1 interview. Recording times: 00:32:24 – 00:32:51. See appendix A: p.430, lines 794 – 802)

Federico also introduces his future hypothetical character as an interpreter, describing himself as interpreting from Russian to Italian with an emphasis on understanding perfectly (line 3), a passive rather than an active form of interpreting. A further projection of his interpreter character then ensues, suggesting a more active form of interpreting, into Russian, but only after a period longer than his three year degree, 'if I have studied for five years' (line 3), suggesting after his first three-year degree and a second two-year post-graduate degree, together with a period spent in the country, 'later Russia' (line 4).

The emphasis on the native-speaker goal is evident again but also in relation to the question of the time necessary to learn the language (as Matteo highlights). The issue of time in fact is recurrent throughout the data. I will turn to look at this in more detail in sections 6.6 – 6.9.

6.4.2 Language level goals set by the institution

The native speaker Discourse can be seen as emerging out of the institution's emphasis on students acquiring higher 'language levels' throughout their academic careers.

Returning to Sslmit's description of what a graduate is supposed to have acquired by the end of their 3-year degree (see chapter 1, section 1.5), high linguistic competence is foregrounded and cultural competence is backgrounded (see chapter 5, section

5.2.5). In the institution's description of a student's final 'knowledge and understanding' their first and second languages are described as being at a C1 level (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages), one level below 'proficiency' (the highest level allowed and close to a 'native speaker' competence). Furthermore, with regards to 'applying knowledge and understanding' the student is expected

- to be able to express themselves fluently and spontaneously in two foreign languages, and with relative fluency and spontaneity, in a third foreign language;

Considering that the entrance level for the institution is placed at B2 for their first language and all other languages are optional, with no specified level or entrance test, theoretically the students could choose a language that they have no prior knowledge of (as Matteo did by choosing German as his second language, see chapter 3, section 3.3). The institution's expectation that students attain a C1 level from a potential beginner A1 level in a second language, as well as B1 in their third foreign language (often a language that students have had no exposure to, e.g. Arabic and Chinese) appears to be very challenging indeed. This might explain why the participants appear to express a concern about their abilities of becoming interpreters by the end of their third year when contextualised as being near 'proficient' in their languages (see sections 6.6 – 6.9, below).

6.4.3 Competing Discourses on the Native-speaker model in language teaching and learning

The narratives that emerged in the data can be contextualised in a wider debate concerning the Discourse that idealised native speaker (NS) models are still used in language teaching and learning, and that they still hold a powerful position of influence (Cook, 1999; Davies, 1995, 2003; Jenkins, 2000, 2007, 2009; Jenkins & Leung, 2013; Kachru, 1994; Leung, Harris & Rampton: 1997; Rampton, 1990).

One counter argument to their use is that the processes taking place in the world with regard to the ever increasing use of English as a form of inter/intranational communication, questions the *authority* of the ‘inner circle’ (Kachru, 1985), the so-called *native speakers*, to dictate the form English takes in the ‘Expanding Circle’ (Ibid), speakers of English as a second or other language. Scholars who have aligned themselves with this position, have turned their attention to studying the plurality of Englishes around the globe, ‘World Englishes’ (WE), to legitimate the variety of those Englishes (Kachru, 1985, 1990, 1991, 2005; Jenkins, 2003; Bolton, 2004, 2006; Canagarajah, 2006, 2007, 2009), as well as considering how English is evolving as a global language, where its future form will be dictated more by the ‘expanding’ and not the ‘inner’ circle, ‘English as a Lingua Franca’ (ELF) (Jenkins, 2000, 2007; Jenkins and Seidlhofer, 2003).

In the context of education, applied linguistics has been seen as a supporter of the native speaker Discourse, drawing as it often does on the figure of the idealized native speaker for its development of models, norms and goals, both for teaching and/or testing languages (Davies, 1995). This benchmark has been seen as resting on the assumption that it is ‘common sense’ that native speakers ‘have a special control over a language, insider knowledge (and) are models we appeal to for the ‘truth’ about the language’ (Ibid: 1). This image of the native speaker has also been described as being founded on the concept that individuals inherit a specific language by being born into a particular social group, and that that inheritance gives specific rights to them for claiming that they speak it well (Rampton, 1990). It also draws on the precept of, ‘one country, one language, one mother tongue’ (Ibid: 97), a precept that is increasingly questionable when mass migration and the establishment of many culturally and linguistically diverse communities is by now a fact of everyday life in most European countries.

Furthermore, this image of the ‘native speaker’ has also been challenged as being sociolinguistically inaccurate, as it is wrong

...to think of people belonging to only one social group, once and for all (as)...
(p)eople participate in many groups (the family, the peer group, and groups

defined by class, region, age, ethnicity, gender etc.): membership changes over time and so does language. Being born into one group does not mean that you automatically speak its language well – many native speakers of English can't write or tell stories, while many non-native speakers can. Nobody's functional command is total: users of a language are more proficient in some areas than other. And most countries are multilingual: from an early age children normally encounter two or more languages. Yet despite the criticisms, the terms native speaker and mother tongue remain in circulation...

(Ibid: 98)

In TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) in the British context for example, criticisms have been made of its not

(taking) account of social and demographic changes which pose troubling questions about the ways in which TESOL pedagogy classifies and conceptualises the large numbers of bilingual learners who are the children and grandchildren of the migrants of the 1950's, 1960's, 1970's and 1980's

(Leung, Harris & Rampton: 1997: 3)

These historic, social and demographic changes challenge underlining assumptions 'that there is an abstracted notion of an idealized native speaker of English from which ethnic and linguistic minorities are automatically excluded' (Ibid: 3), and that minority language bilinguals speak those languages exclusively at home and 'only learn English' at school. In this context the Discourse that native speaker models are desirable is also challenged, in that it does not reflect the reality of modern, contemporary states today.

Also, remaining within the 'native speaker' Discourse, although there are strong arguments to move away from such models (as stated above) 'there is considerable resistance from many quarters, and this is particularly so in the case of accent' (Jenkins, 2009: 10). One of these quarters is perhaps curiously the actual non-native speaker (NNS) community of language teachers themselves. In Jenkins' research for example (Ibid) when over 360 English teachers, mainly NNSs of English from 12 Expanding Circle countries, were asked to appraise different English accents, a

notable elevated status was given to Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (GA) ‘native speaker’ accents³⁹.

6.5 Conclusions

Narratives from the data appear to show the influence of the ‘native speaker’ Discourse on the participants’ projected identities as professional interpreters, particularly in their first terms. Silvia positions herself in relation to Rutland as aspiring to the same level of perfection, a level she maintains that interpreters ‘should be’ at. Matteo describes himself as being amazed by Rutland and states, as do Federico and Silvia, that he wants ‘to be like him’. In earlier talk Matteo also states that he needs ‘to speak a perfect language’ and Maria too says she needs ‘to perfectly understand and perfectly speak’ (although she re-positions herself in the second term interview as expecting less).

With regard to accent in the second narrative about Rutland (section 6.3), Matteo positions Rutland’s native-like accent as being ‘amazing’, and much of the talk about Rutland’s accent in the same narrative seems to prize a native-like voice above all others. Maria states in another episode that having an Italian accent in English would make any interpreting job she did, not ‘a great work’.

Moreover, Matteo’s embedded narrative about needing to go abroad in order to speak like Rutland positions the interpreter-student as requiring ‘native speaker’ exposure in order to become as good as Rutland. This seemingly draws then on the related native speaker Discourse of *one country, one language, one mother tongue* as well as questioning the possibility of students ever attaining such goals within the institution itself.

³⁹ In Jenkin’s research the respondents overwhelmingly placed NS English accents as being the ‘best’, with first best going to UK accents (classified by Jenkins as RP), and second to US accents (which she described as GA).

An important aspect that emerged from many of the narratives as well was the issue of time, and the limitations that that meant for attaining native-like levels ('interpreter levels') within the three-year degree. I go on to look at this issue in the following narratives I analyse (sections 6.6 – 6.9).

6.6 Acquiring an 'interpreter level' and the limitations of time: Matteo's narrative

The role of the native speaker model in the participants' perception of the professional interpreter (section 6.4), was further complicated by the participants' changing view of what language learning actually meant in the field of interpreting, based on a growing awareness that there was more language to be learnt (particularly the technical lexis in diverse fields). This was contrasted with what it had meant before attending the institution, and was complicated by the participants' preoccupation with the time they had to realise their linguistic goals in order to become interpreters (in particular, a focus on the three years of the degree course). I examine these areas through narrative positioning analysis.

In the second group interview Matteo describes how his concept of language learning has changed since he began studying to become an interpreter.

- 1 Matteo: yeah m: well I I love foreign languages I: want to become to::
- 2 become an interpreter (.) and I just know that it's (.) m: more
- 3 difficult than I imagined (.) before (..)
- 4 Alan: why?
- 5 Matteo: (..) ah because erm (4.0) even though you: you think that you know
- 6 a a foreign language for example the: the English language (..)
- 7 when it when it comes to interpreting (..) it's complete different
- 8 thing (.) a:nd I just can't can't speak at all (..) it's: (2.0) you need
- 9 a (.) a: (..) a thorough knowledge of the language to manage the
- 10 situation (2.0) that's it

(Group 2 interview, Matteo. Recording time: 00:39:39 – 00:40:46. See appendix A: p.702, lines 1244 - 1262)

I examine this brief narrative through positioning analysis.

6.6.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

Matteo introduces his narrative with two statements, 'I love foreign languages', 'I want to become to become an interpreter' (lines 1-2. This introduces his present character in the context of the interview, and positions him as determined to realise his goal of becoming an interpreter. However, the last statement 'I just know that it's more difficult than I imagined before' (lines 2-3), introduces his past self (indexed by the past simple form 'imagined') which is positioned as not knowing what he now knows about how difficult it is to actually become an interpreter. There are two characters then, Matteo's self in the institution and his former pre-institutional self, before coming to Sslmit. The sequence of initial statements contextualises 'foreign languages' (line 1) as primary in relation to being an interpreter and suggests that they are relative to how difficult it is to become one.

In his next turn, Matteo's choice of the impersonal 'you' form, in 'you think you know a foreign language' (lines 5-6), indexes all the students in the institution (himself included) and positions them all as sharing the same belief before entering Sslmit. Matteo's former pre-institutional character is positioned as being uninformed in thinking he knew English well enough to become an interpreter, but his institutional character (talking in the interview) is positioned as being able to make informed statements now, that 'when it comes to interpreting (..) it's complete different thing' (lines 7-8). Matteo's subsequent assertion that he 'just can't can't speak at all' (with the emphatic repetition of 'can't') positions his institutional character as being distinctly uneasy with this newly acquired knowledge. This is signalled by an exaggerated claim that he can't speak *at all*, something which is clearly untrue as entrance requirements for Sslmit are set at a B2 level (see chapter one) and Matteo's

performance in English throughout the interview suggests everything to the contrary. Matteo's final statement clarifies what he means about the language being different (lines 7-8) as he positions the interpreter-student (himself and everyone, indexed again by the impersonal 'you') as requiring more 'knowledge' ('a thorough knowledge', line 9) about the language, in order 'to manage the situation' (lines 9-10), (presumably the interpreting event in the classroom, or potentially any interpreting event).

6.6.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

The narrative is embedded in talk about Silvia's expressed doubts about wanting to become a professional interpreter any more. In my talk, I introduced the concept of 'passion' for language learning, which emerged in her previous one-to-one interview, and suggest that that passion might be in some way diminished, drawing a parallel between passion for languages and passion to become an interpreter. When I ask the group about their passion Matteo states that his passion is the same, but in a flat, monotone voice, suggesting the opposite. I then challenge him by saying that he doesn't 'sound very enthusiastic', positioning him as not telling the group the truth. In reaction to this challenge, Matteo introduces the narrative (lines 1-10 above) positioning his perceived lack of knowledge about 'the language' as a reason for his apparent lack of enthusiasm.

In the narrative-telling event my question 'why?' (line 4) challenges Matteo again. I position myself as being sceptical of Matteo's claim that language learning is more difficult for interpreter-students. Matteo's long pause (4 seconds) suggests that he is evaluating the best way to ratify his initial claim. His choice of the impersonal 'you' form, in 'you think that you know a foreign language' (lines 5-6), shifts the focus from himself as having personal problems, (noticeable by the use of the first person pronoun 'I' before, lines 2-3), to a widening of the problem to all students of interpreting. Matteo's return to the use of 'I' subsequently, in 'I just can't can't speak at all' (line 8), positions him as being subject to pressures that are common to 'all' students and not only being his own personal problem.

Before looking at this narrative in relation to wider Discourses (section 6.9) I present another two narratives (sections 6.7–6.8.2), which appear to be related to Matteo's (analysing them at levels one and two). My final observations on potential Discourses draw on all three narratives then.

6.7 Acquiring an 'interpreter level' and the limitations of time: Rosa's narrative

In her second one-to-one interview Rosa also tells me how she has begun to see language learning differently as well, and how she has changed her language learning objectives since coming to the institution.

- 1 Rosa: erm for example at first before coming to this university I was
2 trying to like learn same time 3 4 languages but I wasn't
3 studying it as I'm studying now like every subject you have to
4 know everything like doing mediations and (.) like studying it
5 like this goo:d I was like just studying to be able to talk to
6 people normal saying hello normal things and then erm here (.)
7 erm like more than 3 languages so: difficult cos (.) it's just you
8 don't have ti:me (.) I'm always having problem with time
9 ((small laugh)) (..) it takes a lot of time like to know a language
10 like to be able to do a mediation cos you have to know like all
11 the wor:ds and (.) so (..) I got to know that (xx) will need a lot
12 of time a lot of work a lot of time (.)
13 Alan: right so in the individual mediation situations (.) to learn the (..)
14 vocabulary (.) is it mainly vocabulary we're talking about or:
15 grammar or
16 Rosa: yeah everything but yeah also vocabulary

(Rosa 2 interview. Recording time: 00:35:45 – 00:37:04. See appendix A:
p.607, lines 940 -969)

6.7.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

As Matteo before, Rosa introduces two characters in this narrative. The first character is Rosa's pre-institutional self in the past ('before coming to this university', line 1), trying to learn 3 to 4 languages (line 2), and the other character is Rosa's institutional self in the interview (indexed by the use of the present continuous tense, 'I'm studying now', line 3), trying to learn those languages in the institution in order to become an interpreter. Rosa's former pre-institutional character is positioned as being unaware of how language learning is different for an interpreter-student. Her character is described as learning how to say 'normal things' (line 6), (i.e. saying hello), whereas her other institutional character is positioned as having to learn 'every subject', and 'know everything' (line 4), in order to do 'mediations', to be an interpreter. The positioning of her institutional character as realising that language learning for an interpreter is more complex and difficult, highlights Rosa's preoccupation with not having enough time,

- 7 ... it's just you
8 don't have time (.) I'm always having problem with time
9 ((small laugh)) (.) it takes a lot of time like to know a language
10 like to be able to do a mediation

The contrasting use of the impersonal 'you' form and the personal 'I' form position Rosa (like Matteo) as being subject to pressures that affect all the students. The use of 'you' in 'you don't have time' positions all the students as having to deal with the pressures of time to learn more language than was previously expected, whereas the use of 'I' in 'I'm always having problem with time' positions Rosa's own character as experiencing this personally, albeit in the same way as the wider student population does. Rosa's repetition of the word 'time' in the subsequent stretch of speech also places heightened emphasis on its restriction to her reaching a satisfactory level of linguistic performance

- 11 ... need a lot
12 of time a lot of work a lot of time (.)

6.7.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

The narrative is embedded in talk about Rosa's expressed uncertainty about becoming an interpreter, due to the presence of 'bilinguals' (as she refers to them) in the class, whom she positions as knowing languages much better than she does. I remind her that her earlier talk about becoming an interpreter was described as her 'dream' in the first interview, positioning her as lacking resolve and determination. Rosa refuses to ratify that positioning by claiming that although she is 'studying a lot ... the result is... not as I expecting'. When I challenge her again by asking her how she has come to that conclusion about her language development, Rosa initiates the narrative (lines 1-16 above).

Before the narrative I positioned Rosa as not being capable of judging her own actual linguistic level (or the level she needs to attain in the institution). The narrative she introduces in response, presents Rosa's two selves as two characters, pre-institutional and institutional, positioning the latter as having acquired a deeper understanding of what language learning means for a student-interpreter (and myself as interviewer, as not). She then positions me as ratifying her institutional character's insight into the increased complexities of language learning for aspiring interpreters, as well as inviting me to share her preoccupations about the limitations of time to do so. I ratify her positioning by showing agreement and requesting information about specific language problem areas (vocabulary or grammar) that might be the source of her problem. Rosa responds by identifying 'everything' as a problem, reinforcing her institutional character's positioning as not learning enough and not having enough time to do so.

6.8 Acquiring an 'interpreter level' and the limitations of time: Maria's narrative

In the first group interview Maria also appears to be concerned with the issue of time in relation to reaching certain language goals. The focus is not on her own personal language goals, but on what she thinks the teachers expect of her implicitly.

1 Maria: the first semester was quite good but not good enough for what they
2 are expecting from us (.) because if we have to reach an interpreter
3 level for the third year (.) we're wa:y late and we've done a lot like
4 we didn't stop for a moment (.) we we hadn't time to catch our
5 breath but it's not enough (.) an::d (.) this year I think it was the first
6 year that we only had forty hours of grammar instead of sixty and so:
7 sh- she was really good but I think that if we had had the boscolo
8 from the first semester we would be half of it
9 Fed: I don't think [(xx)
10 Maria: [half the number
11 yeah because she is really strict we're going this way so you're
12 doing 25 exercise for next week (.) that's it (.) ok? So you have to
13 come here and you have to know everything you've done (..) up to
14 yesterday (.) so:: (.) it's great it's a great language and it's really nice
15 to do it and you have to focus a lot but it comes natural after a while
16 Alan: hmm
17 Maria: but we should have started earlier and (.) in a stronger way (.) so:
18 Alan: hmm
19 Maria: it's good I'm happy with what we did but (.) we should have started
20 with boscolo

(Group 1 interview. Recording time: 00:19:12 – 00:20:24. See appendix A:
p.420, Lines 461 – 493)

6.8.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

Maria introduces the scene as 'the first semester' Russian classes where the Russian teachers (indexed by the plural pronoun 'they', line 1) are positioned as expecting the students 'to reach an interpreter level for the third year', (lines 2-3), (something which Matteo also expects although he makes no reference to teacher expectations, see section 6.6). Maria's criticism of the semester, 'quite good but not good enough' (line

1), introduces her own character in the present interview context, summarising and appraising the overall development of the students, and in doing so positioning herself as an expert in the language learning development required to reach an ‘interpreter level’ goal. This positioning of herself as an expert allows her to comment further that the students (and Maria herself, indexed by the pronoun ‘we’) are ‘wa:y late’ (line 3) and that not enough grammar was included in the first course (‘we only had forty hours of grammar instead of sixty’, line 6). Maria then introduces the character of one specific Russian teacher, Boscolo, whom she positions as being much better than the rest at reaching interpreter level goals, again positioning herself as an expert able to critically judge the professional abilities of the teacher. Maria positions the teacher as being ‘really strict’ (line 11), using reported speech to voice her as authoritarian through the use of modal verbs of obligation in her instructions to the class, ‘So *you have to* come here and *you have to* know everything you’ve done’ (lines 12-13).

Maria’s commentary serves to continue to position herself as an expert and the strict teaching method as the best method, it also positions the other students as being in need of such strict approaches as the suggestion is that they will not be capable of reaching the level required without clear guidance and commands from the teacher.

6.8.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

The narrative is embedded in talk about the participants’ second language learning and a request by me to talk about their experiences.

In response to my request, Maria positions herself as an informant for both myself, and the group, on experiences in Russian classes. She also positions herself as an expert on the institution’s language objectives, which are to bring students to the level of ‘an interpreter’, and the teachers’ performances in attaining that goal. When Maria says ‘we’re wa:y late’ (line 3), the third person plural pronoun ‘we’ suggests that she is referencing all the ‘students of Russian’ but it can also be seen as positioning all the participants present as being included in her comments about their second languages. She positions them then as all being potentially behind schedule to reach ‘an

interpreter level'. Federico's attempt to interrupt (potentially to challenge, by his use of the negative phrase 'I don't think) is silenced and Maria continues by introducing the Russian teacher's reported speech as though it were her own, directed at the group, positioning them as requiring 'strict' teachers and urging them to keep up with every demand made on them to learn. Maria's identification with the teacher is further strengthened by her affirmation that 'we should have started earlier and (.) in a stronger way' (line 17), favouring the approach voiced in Boscolo's previous reported speech, as well as her own final expression of conviction that 'we should have started with boscolo' (lines 19-20).

I now look at how these narratives seem to be related to wider Discourses in my level three analysis.

6.9 Level 3 analysis

Maria, Rosa and Matteo, all position students as requiring a much higher level of language than they have at present if they wish to become interpreters. The Discourse that appears to be present in all these narratives seems to invoke the 'native speaker' Discourse again, as previously discussed (see section 6.4.3), whereby those language levels required to become an interpreter are positioned as being at a much higher level than the participants perceive they have. Matteo's statement that he wants to become an interpreter is immediately followed by positioning his language learning as not being at the level required. Although not explicitly stated there is an implicit reference to the limitations of time in order to achieve the relevant level, present in the sense of urgency he communicates to acquire more language (see section 6.6). Rosa makes explicit references to time in relation to reaching the right 'interpreter' level, 'it takes a lot of time like to know a language like to be able to do a mediation' (see section 6.7), and Maria positions her teachers as being responsible for reaching 'an interpreter level by the third year', a clear reference to the limitations of time in relation to the three year degree (see section 6.8).

The importance of time, which emerged in these narratives, appears to be connected to how the participants perceived themselves as having to be interpreters by the end of their third year, and the perception that interpreter levels of language are native speaker levels. Looking more generally at the research, there were no instances in the data where the participants made reference to clear guidelines about the language levels they were expected to attain over the course of their degree. Moreover, the institution appeared to position them as being the ‘most talented’ and ‘the best’ in the field of language learning from the very beginning of their academic careers, which seemed to place high expectations on their language performance in general (see section 5.2.6). The unstated ‘native speaker’ Discourse then (made more relevant by its not being evidently challenged or clarified by the institution or its representatives, i.e. teachers) appears to have encouraged native speaker models as being the language goal for prospective interpreters within the three-year degree (i.e. as shown in the Rutland narratives, sections 6.2 – 6.4).

The apparent perception that participants have, that they should be *interpreters* at the end of their three-year degree, is perhaps suggested by the original name of the institution itself, Sslmit (Advanced School *for Interpreters and Translators* in Modern Languages) as well as its newer title D.I.T (department for *interpreters and translators*). These names might well lead one to expect students to be interpreters by the end of their degrees. However, the actual title of students’ first cycle degree in the institution is ‘Laurea in Mediazione Linguistica Interculturale’, a ‘degree in intercultural linguistic *mediation*’, emphasising that students are considered to be mediators (a more generic term) rather than professional interpreters. In fact, it is only after the post-graduate, specialisation degree, that students receive any recognition by the institution as being actual interpreters, as the title of this degree suggests, ‘laurea magistrale in Interpretazione’ (specialized degree in interpreting). In this respect, the onus on achieving native-like language skills in order to claim the identity of an interpreter can be seen as being based on a false assumption, a further erroneous Discourse (which appears to go unchallenged by the participants) that students are *de facto* interpreters after three years.

The perceived complexity of language learning in relation to native speaker models of attainment, and the inhibitions of time in achieving linguistic goals to become interpreters⁴⁰, appears to have led some of the participants to focus on their present language studies much more, as emerged in their second interviews. I now turn to look at these interviews from this perspective.

6.10 Narratives focusing on present language goals and not on becoming interpreters

In Silvia's second interview she begins to show signs of not wanting to become an interpreter any more (as highlighted in chapter 5). When I ask her about her goals she responds in the following way

- 1 Silvia: yeah because I mean my goal is to know those languages (.) right
2 Alan: right
3 Silvia: so I'm studying to know those languages (.) and that's (..) for sure
4 ((small laugh))
5 then we'll see if I (..) (I don't know if) am becoming an interpreter or not
6 Alan: right
7 Silvia: I it's a way to ah:: to reach (.) my f::irst goal but since I'm not sure
8 what is going to be my: next goal or if it's gonna be the same (.) ah:
9 I'm just working day by day to to reach it and then if there's erm a a
10 path to choose I will choose then I don't care now ((laughs))

(Silvia 2 interview. Recording time: 01:08:45 - 01:09:31. See appendix A: p.664, lines 1415 - 1429)

Silvia expresses her primary goal as being to learn languages. The manner in which she expresses this is through clear statements of intention followed by affirming words and phrases, 'right' and 'that's for sure' (lines 1 and 2), positioning me as questioning

⁴⁰ This also emerged in my observations in the field. See appendix B, p. 745 (socialising after the second group interview).

her resolve and thereby asserting her intentions to me. This is expressed as her ‘first goal’ (line 7) but her ‘next goal’ (line 8), potentially becoming an interpreter, is unsure. Silvia finishes her last turn by focusing on the present, she is working towards the goal of learning languages ‘day by day’ (line 9) and ‘if there’s a path to choose’ (lines 9-10) she will decide when it comes, but for now she doesn’t appear to care.

When I ask Matteo about the future, towards the end of his second one-to-one interview, he replies

er: I just don’t think about the future (.) so much (.)

(Matteo 2 interview. See appendix A: p.570, lines 1061 - 1062)

When I then go on to suggest that his ‘passion’ to become an interpreter (clearly stated in his first one-to-one interview) might not be ‘central at the moment’ in his life (see section 6.6), he affirms that it is

- 1 ...but now I’m (..) I’m here in the in the Sslmit and I’m I think I’m
- 2 I’m just on the right path and so I’m more (...) er: (.) not at ease (.)
- 3 but er: I’m more confident

(Matteo 2 interview. See appendix A: p.571, lines 1087 – 1091)

The same metaphor of being on the ‘right path’ emerges in his talk as in Silvia’s, clearly linked to his being in Sslmit (and perhaps suggesting that he trusts the institution to take him in the right direction).

I pursue this focus on the present by asking Matteo if his apparent confidence of being ‘on the right path’ (line 2) might be due to professor Moscato’s statement (see chapter 5) that getting into Sslmit meant that students would eventually be interpreters. Matteo replies

- 1 hm: yes something has changed er (4.0) because i: have seen
- 2 that studying to become an interpreter ah: brings you a lot of stress
- 3 (.) but I’m just doing my best a:nd I’m in the right place so: (3.0)

- 4 I'm just taking it easy (3.0) and that's it I'm: (...) my my passion is
 5 the same (.) i: (...) I spend many hours studying an- (...) and so I'm
 6 just quite I'm quite relaxed

(Matteo 2. Recording time: 1:09:29 – 01:10:20. See appendix A: p. 571, lines 1107 – 1116)

Like Silvia, Matteo expresses a clear intention to focus on the present. In this last turn, the reason he gives for not thinking about the future is the stress of studying to become an interpreter, which might be linked to his own high language learning expectations and the difficulty of achieving them. By focusing on the present, 'taking it easy' (line 4) and not thinking too far ahead, Matteo seems to focus principally on being 'in the right place' (line 3).

Rosa too when asked about her aspirations for the future in her second one-to-one interview says

- 1 I have no I idea ((laughs)) because I I don't know I'm just studying
 2 until I graduate and then maybe I have to think about it more but (..)
 3 I know I like language I know I like interpreting (.) translation no

(Rosa 2 interview. See appendix A: p.609, lines 980 - 986)

Rosa describes herself as 'just studying until I graduate' (lines 1-2), as do Silvia and Matteo, and like them as well she does not want to think about the future beyond that as she has 'no idea' (line 1).

6.11 Conclusions

All the participants' first one-to-one interviews expressed the clear goal of becoming interpreters at the end of their studies. However, by their second one-to-one interviews, towards the end of their first academic year, significant changes in this

positioning have taken place. The effect of the native speaker Discourse and the limited time scale perceived to acquire such a level, an 'interpreter level' (with the implicit assumption that students are interpreters after three years), sees a shift among the participants from long-term interpreter objectives to short-term language goals. Also, the participants' apparent increasing awareness that the language they thought they knew is in actual fact much more complicated in interpreting situations (further complicating the native speaker Discourse), adds to this pressure to learn more language than they initially imagined necessary.

Chapter 7

Data analysis

7.1. *Interpreter-students in the institution – Introduction*

In this chapter I look at the relationships between students and their peers in the context of the institution, as they emerged in both the one-to-one and group interviews over their first academic year. Through narrative positioning analysis I focus particularly on those narratives that were concerned principally with these relationships, and how these narratives give insights into the participants' changing identities within the institution.

7.2 Students are 'Nerds', the relationship between work and play: Rosa's narrative

In her first interview, I ask Rosa for her comments about the 'classroom atmosphere' since starting her first year. The following is a transcript of her response, which I go on to analyse through the lens of narrative positioning.

1 Alan: yeah and what about your colleagues I mean what sort of (.)

2 atmosphere is there in the classroom since you've arrived?

3 Rosa: m::: I think it's good like (.) everybody is like (.) nerd like all the

4 time studying it's like

5 Alan: ner:d

6 Rosa: yeah ((laughs)) ((both laugh))

7 Alan: what do you [mean by

8 Rosa: [wasn't expecting

9 that ((laughs))

10 Alan: yeah?

11 Rosa: yeah I I don't know I thought like it's a university here because also

standing apart from the other students, as her description of ‘everybody’ as being ‘like (a) nerd’ (line 3) seems to exclude her (i.e. she might have said ‘we are all nerds’, using the plural pronoun *we* to include herself in the description). Rosa positions herself as though she were an outside observer discovering something that she ‘wasn’t expecting’ (line 8), and this becomes more evident as the narrative develops.

Rosa then changes the scene, from the classroom to Sslmit as an institution (which she refers to as the ‘university here’, line 11), comparing Sslmit to another university campus at Rimini where she studied previously (see chapter 3, section 3.3.1 for a brief biography). Rosa positions Sslmit as being ‘completely different’ (line 13) from Rimini, where ‘everybody was thinking about partying not studying’ (line 16). She then positions herself as being part of ‘a group of erasmus people’ in Rimini (line 19), (foreign exchange students), where ‘everybody has the goal to have fun’ as well, but also ‘to pass the exams and ... learn stuff’ (lines 21-22). Rosa therefore positions herself as someone who likes to have fun but who is also interested in the practical aspect of university, of studying and passing exams. This positioning reinforces a separation between her character and that of all the other Sslmit students.

In the last part of the narrative, when I ask Rosa to explain what she means by calling the Sslmit students ‘nerds’, she returns to her initial definition of them as always studying, studying all day long ‘till 12’ at night (line 26), and ‘only studying (..) nothing else’ (line 27). The repetition of ‘study’ (lines 25-27) serves to reinforce the continuity and uninterrupted nature of the Sslmit students’ life, devoted to study and only to study.

In this narrative then, Rosa positions herself as an outsider with regard to her fellow students in Sslmit. They are all positioned as being ‘nerds’, only studying, whereas Rosa studies and passes exams, as well as having fun (engaging in other activities other than study).

7.2.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

Rosa's narrative emerges from talk about her experiences at Sslmit since arriving, and is a specific response to my inquiry about those experiences with her 'colleagues' and the 'atmosphere' in the classroom (lines 1-2).

In the narrative-telling event she positions herself as my informant, positioning me as a willing participant in her humorous characterisation of the class as all being 'nerds', signalled by her laughter (line 6), and ratified by myself by my joining in with that laughter. This positioning serves to align me too with wider assumptions that life must be more than just studying.

When Rosa describes her previous experience in Rimini, and how all the students were only interested in partying, she positions herself as being part of this world, but she also positions herself as being interested in study, by identifying herself with a subgroup of 'Erasmus' students which do both. Rosa's portrayal of herself as a person who likes to have fun (i.e. 'party', as she describes the students at Rimini as doing) is tempered by a need to be seen as a serious student as well. In this respect she appears to position me not as an outside researcher, but as a teacher in the institution (someone who might not approve of students not studying), and herself as a responsible student. Rosa projects an identity of someone who wants to have fun then, but who also knows that she has to study and pass exams.

Before going on to a level three analysis (considering issues of Discourse), I turn to analyse a continuation of this theme in Rosa's second one-to-one interview at the end of her first academic year. Again, I present the transcript of the narrative and then analyse it using narrative positioning.

7.3 'I'm a nerd now': Rosa's second narrative

In Rosa's second interview, I ask her if the classroom atmosphere has changed over the period since our previous encounter.

1 Rosa: ... I think maybe now that only that everybody is
2 only studying but (..) it's it's Sslmit so: I was expecting that
3 ((small laugh))
4 Alan: cos you said that when you came here first you (..) you
5 thought that the students here they were as you said ner:ds
6 Rosa: ((laughs)) well now that I have become another nerd so
7 ((laughs)) maybe I am getting along better
8 Alan: yeah?
9 Rosa: yeah th- (..) yeah they kinda study a lot but once a day once
10 a week also go out and have fun so (..) I think that the erm
11 (..) atmosphere here like the students is really nice it's really
12 good (..) everybody like tries to help each other out and if
13 you ask somebody help they help you it's not like it's not a
14 bad er competition (2.0)

(Rosa 2 interview. Recording time: 00:05:13-00:06:07. See appendix A: p.584,
lines 142 -165)

7.3.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the story event

Rosa positions the character of the Sslmit student as unchanged from her first interview, repeating her earlier comment from that interview that 'everybody's only studying' (lines 1-2). However, in this second narrative Rosa positions her own character as having changed since then. She describes herself as 'expecting' (line 2) Sslmit students to be studying all the time, in contrast to her first interview where she said she 'wasn't expecting that'. Rosa therefore positions herself as someone who has learnt what it means to be a *Sslmit student*. The expectation that this would happen, that all students would eventually be only studying all the time, is presented as being part of a normal process in the institution. This is evidenced by her comment, 'it's Sslmit so:' (line 2), where 'so' is followed by a pause and not a qualifying phrase,

suggesting a shared understanding between us about the *nature* of Sslmit, an understanding that does not need to be clarified.

When I remind Rosa of her comment in her first interview, that the students were all nerds, she no longer positions herself as being different from them, but rather as being one of them now, ‘well now that I have become another nerd’ (line 6). This apparent acceptance of being a nerd is presented as a reason for her ‘getting on better now’ (line 7), presumably with the other students, with whom she now shares the same approach to study. However, she also introduces a change in the other students at this point, describing them (and herself) as having ‘fun’ once a week (lines 9-10). This ‘fun’ appears to be a cause for an improvement in the classroom atmosphere where ‘everybody... tries to help each other out’ (line 12).

Rosa’s positioning of herself as being an outsider in the first interview has shifted to her being more of an insider, although this is not a complete transformation, as the other students are still referred to using the third person plural, ‘they’ (‘they kinda study a lot’, line 9), and not the first person plural ‘we’ (a pronoun which would signify her inclusion). Rosa portrays her character therefore as having adapted to the ‘nerd-like’ work ethic of the institution, but not as having entirely accepted it as her own.

7.3.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

The narrative emerges from talk about Rosa’s progression in her studies in Italian and how she feels she is improving, elicited by my request that she talk about the classroom ‘atmosphere’ again, contextualising it as something we have already talked about.

In the narrative-telling event, Rosa positions herself as an experienced student in the institution who ‘was expecting’ everybody to be ‘only studying’ as ‘it’s Sslmit’ (line 2), positioning me as a member of the institution who will ratify her *knowledge of how things are*, in particular that Sslmit students are *naturally* going to be studying all the time as it’s the *nature* of the institution.

In the interview, I position Rosa as potentially being a ‘nerd’ herself, by reminding her of how she described the students at Sslmit in her first interview (lines 4-5). Rosa appears to ratify that positioning by stating that she too has become ‘a nerd’ (line 6), and attributing this to her ‘getting along better’ with the other students.

In her last turn, Rosa positions herself as an informant on the students’ life both inside and outside the classroom, describing the students as having ‘fun’ once a week (in contrast to her initial positioning of them as only studying, at the beginning) and having a good atmosphere in the classroom where everyone helps each other. This positions me as a teacher who is interested in the students’ life but also as ratifying the connection between ‘fun’ and a more productive classroom environment.

7.3.3 Level 3 analysis: Connecting levels one and two to Discourses

Rosa’s projected identity as a student, changes from her first interview where she positions herself as being different from the other students in Sslmit, placing ‘having fun’ before study, to one where she puts study first and fun as secondary (i.e. only once a week). This change is attributed to the *nature* of the institution itself, positioning it as being agentive in forming students in this way. The emphasis on students always studying in the institution appears to connect to narratives that position the institution as expecting its students to be the best (see section 5.2.6), due to its own self-promotion as the best institution for training interpreters in the Italian higher education system. This seems to draw from neo-liberal Discourses again then (see section 5.2.7) which describe marketization processes in higher education. Sslmit’s prestige and value on the academic market is framed as a guarantee of future professional success and attracts a particular type of ‘privileged customer’, students who are ‘the best of the best...la crème de la crème’ (see Maria’s narrative in section 5.2.6) and who are required to perform accordingly throughout their academic career. Rosa appears to be suggesting this by her comment ‘it’s Sslmit so:’ where the final ‘so’ introduces a causal argument that she feels does not even need to be stated, that

students who manage to get in to Sslmit are expected to study all the time to maintain high standards associated with institution itself⁴¹.

I now turn to look at other data to support this interpretation of Rosa's positioning in her narratives.

7.4 The relationship between work and play: Silvia's narrative

In the first group interview, I asked the participants about their workload in the institution. Silvia commented, 'workload well I don't think it's (.) that much if you can organise yourself', and proceeded to talk about how students need to plan their studies more carefully. However, not far into her turn, when she was talking about students wasting time, she appears to react to an indistinguishable comment from Rosa, by saying

- 1 ok sorry ah: I'm saying that there's [not only sslmit we have whole life ok?
- 2 ((small laughter)) there are plenty of thing we can do and sometimes we just
- 3 have to rest too I don't know to go and have fu:n because there are a lot of
- 4 [pressure on us

(Group 1 interview, Silvia. See appendix A: p.426, lines 655 - 661)

The loud, sustained, high pitched tone which overlays this stretch of talk suggests a note of exasperation, coming almost as an outburst from Silvia. Silvia is talking to the group, positioning them as living only for Sslmit ('there's not only Sslmit', line 1), which suggests only for study as it contrasts with the sentence 'we just have to rest too I don't know to go and have fu:n' (lines 2-3). Similar to Rosa's narrative then Sslmit is positioned as continually requiring students to work and study (recalling Rosa's comment that all the students in Sslmit are 'nerds').

⁴¹ See appendix B, p. 744 for observations in the field relevant to this Discourse (a conversation with Matteo).

In this extract Silvia portrays herself as a critic of the other participants' inability to relax and have fun in Sslmit, as well as a caring advisor warning them about the dangers to their health (i.e. the dangers of having a lot of pressure on them and not resting). Silvia however, does not talk as though she were outside the group, as her use of plural, subjective and objective pronouns show in 'we just have to rest' (lines 2-3) and 'there are a lot of pressure on *us*' (lines 3-4). She positions herself as sharing the group's pressures, but also as someone who sees the dangers that they cannot. As with Rosa, Silvia appears to invoke the Discourse then that the institution imposes pressure for high performance on its students ('there are a lot of pressure on us'), which emerges in general dispositions towards study that limit their pursuit of 'fun' and their ability to 'rest'.

A potential interpretation of the type of pressure Silvia is referring to emerges in an earlier one-to-one interview (as previously examined, see section 5.2.6) in her narrative about her first day in the institution and the welcome speech to the new students.

- 1 .. they told us you're the best (.) because you just entered the best school in
- 2 italy for example I was like oh my god ((intake of breath with half laugh)) a
- 3 lot of pressure...

(Silvia 1 interview. See appendix A: p.397, lines 192 – 196)

Silvia's narrative about her first day positions the authorities of Sslmit (indexed by the pronoun 'they', line 1), as expecting their students to be the best already, before even commencing their studies, and that that places enormous pressure on the students to perform as such, right from the very beginning of those studies.

7.4.1 The relationship between work and play: Maria's narrative

In her first group interview, Maria also relates a narrative about the opening day speech given by representatives of Sslmit (see section 5.2.6 for a detailed analysis)

- 1 it's what we were welcomed with (.) they said ohh you are the more
- 2 talented one ((gushing)) the best of the best you're la crème delle crème

(Group 1 interview, Maria. See appendix A: p.457, lines 1697 - 1700)

This extract shows how Maria, like Silvia, is uncomfortable with how the institution positions the new students as already being the best, 'the more talented one ((gushing)) the best of the best you're la crème delle crème' (lines 1-2) as she reports it. The opening day speech which Silvia describes as putting pressure on her to perform is described by Maria as ignoring the 'hard work' that students had to put in to enter the institution and the work they still have to do to succeed in becoming interpreters.

In an earlier exchange on the same episode I ask Maria what she would have liked to have heard instead at the opening day speech, to which Maria replies

I would use (.) err: (...) congratulation (.) you did it (.) now keep on it
it's not like you get in so you're an interpreter no way (.)

(Group 1 interview, Maria. See appendix A: p.456, lines 1657 - 1660)

Through imagined reported speech Maria voices the authorities as giving a speech which serves as a counter-discourse to what they are actually reported to have said, (i.e. 'you are the best of the best'). Rather than being the best Maria proposes they give their congratulations and urge the students to begin what is suggested as being a long road ahead. Maria appears to sustain the argument that by being called the best at the very beginning of their university careers, students are encouraged to think of themselves already as being interpreters, something she strongly challenges.

7.5 Conclusions

In Rosa's first narrative she introduces the concept that all her fellow peers in Sslmit are 'nerds', in that they are always studying. By her second interview in the second term, she identifies herself as being a nerd too, and describes the cause for this as being the institution itself, suggesting that it makes students that way.

Silvia's initial narrative (section 7.4) identifies the institution as dominating her fellow students' lives, where they invest all their time in work and study, and very little to rest and 'fun'⁴². Unlike Rosa's narrative, Silvia's narrative positions Sslmit as being too dominant in student lives ('there's not only sslmit we have whole life ok', line 1), where the institution is presented almost as a threat to the students' well-being. In the narrative-telling event, Silvia appears to feel that it is necessary to remind her fellow participants that 'we just have to rest too' (lines 2-3), as though this is something they had forgotten how to do.

Silvia and Maria's opening day narratives both portray the institution's representatives as positioning them as being the 'best' students in Italy, setting a high benchmark and set of expectations right from the very beginning of their academic careers. Silvia's opening day narrative (section 7.4) conveys a sense of surprise and preoccupation about this accolade, and a feeling perhaps of having to perform beyond her abilities. Maria's narrative of the same event however (section 7.4.1), adopts an angry tone, as the title of being the 'best' negates the *hard work* she feels that all the students have already put in to enter the institution, as well as the hard work they still need to keep up in order to become interpreters. In both narratives, there is the suggestion that *hard work* is encouraged by the institution (although not necessarily acknowledged all the time, as suggested by Maria), reinforced by its position in the education market which it appears to promote by claiming to have the 'best' students. The neoliberal Discourse then of a marketization of higher education, which first emerged in Matteo's narrative about students having 'talent' (see chapter 5, section 5.2), seems to be operative here too. The participants' narratives describe their lives in the institution as being dominated by hard work and study, which is projected as being part of the identity of

⁴² See my field notes (appendix B, p. 744 and p.745) for similar observations in the field (a conversation with Matteo and a group conversation).

the Sslmit student, an identity which is enforced by the institution's positioning of itself as being the best and having the best students accordingly.

I now turn to examine a theme that emerged very frequently among my participants when talking about their peers in the institution, competitiveness.

7.6 Students and competitiveness in the institution - Introduction

In their first one-to-one interviews, all the participants talked about the heightened levels of competition among the students at Sslmit, positioning Sslmit as a place where competition was to be expected.

In his first one-to-one interview, Matteo talks about the difference between his first degree in oriental languages at Rome University (see chapter 3, section 3.3.1 for a brief biography) and his experiences in Sslmit. At Rome

what was important was the was was just to pass the exam get a bachelor degree and and that's it..

(Matteo 1 interview. See appendix A: p.373, lines 230 – 233)

At Sslmit however,

well you just don't have to study for the classes...

I just try to: to do more (.) cos I feel that there's a lot of com- there's a great competition

(Matteo 1 interview. See appendix A: p.373, lines 234 – 238)

Matteo introduces 'competition' as something that is quite distinctive to Sslmit then, and to the students that frequent it, in contrast to his experiences in Rome.

Silvia, in her first interview talks about *knowing*, previous to entering Sslmit, that the institution has always been associated with competition.

Sslmit is has always been a competition place th-
they told me that but I can kind of agree with them

(Silvia 1 interview. See appendix A: p.396, lines 144 – 146)

This association between Sslmit and competition also emerged in a narrative in the first group interview which I present now, going on to analysis it through the lens of narrative positioning in the narrative event (level one) and the narrative-telling event (level two), and finally coming to consider the wider influence of Discourses (level three).

7.7 Narratives of competitiveness - The first group interview

In this extract, I look at how a narrative episode is jointly constructed about the participants' experiences of competition in the classroom.

Approximately 8 minutes into the first group interview, the following exchange occurs (see below). Maria has been talking about her first practical interpreting experience in the classroom, where she had been called to the front of the class to interpret between an Italian and an English teacher (who are both reading from a pre-prepared dialogue in their respective languages):

1 Maria: ... but it was just nice it was (..) erm:: emotional because (.) it's not
2 just you and two people so you know that the other people do and say
3 about what you're saying so (.) if you make (any) mistakes they
4 understand and they say maybe they say ahh well I might have said it in
5 another way (.) or as soon as you talk other things come up through your
6 mind and you say oh: (that) was (the) word but that's fine an::d it's just
7 (.) good

8 Alan: hm

9 Maria: it feels good

10 Alan: what's the general feeling in the classroom do you think I mean what
 11 sort of atmosphere do you get from your colleagues? is th- is there a
 12 lot of support there?

13 Silvia: Ah:: there's competition but there's also support (.) yes (.) they tell you
 14 in a calm way it's not the wa:y it's this way ((imitates another student
 15 whispering with a condescending tone)) ((laughter)) or they might say
 16 ((makes sound with lips suggesting a brush-off remark)) that was that was wrong (.)
 17 you can't say it that wa:y (.) bu:t it's: there's a happy atmosphere

18 Maria: relaxed

19 Silvia: [relaxed yeah

20 Alan: [yeah everybody
 21 feels that?

22 Alan: is it [is it relaxed

23 Rosa: [(yeah I think so)

24 Alan: yeah?

25 Silvia: excited also [we are all

26 Alan: [hmm

27 Silvia: motivated as I said

28 Alan: yeah

29 Silvia: an:d (2.0) I don't know what to say ((small laugh))
 30 ((Researcher looks at Federico))

31 Fed: yes I told you that I feel a a wei:rd ah:: degree of competition (and) er
 32 erm high self esteem (.) an::d the:n (..) again it's it's not for me I'm
 33 not judging anyone (.) erm: I just sometimes feel it's (.) weird it's it's
 34 nothing I do so I don't really understand it (.) bu:: m:: (..) yes it feels a
 35 little bit exaggerated and it's most times (.) justified it's people who
 36 really know what they are saying but you always have a way to of
 37 sometimes you just don't really need to say it ((small laugh)) to to
 38 show that you (.) knew better an::d a::: there's always a:: (.) a way to
 39 say and not to say as a in a mocking or a:: (.) presumptuous way (.)
 40 and it's not that the general thing they're not saying you're a just a bag

41 of (3.0) not quite nice ((laughter)) eh: no it's (good) people and it's
 42 very there's a good thing yes and (xxx) exciting erm:: it's (.) erm
 43 (don't know) maybe you don't speak of this at [the beginning
 44 Silvia: [well
 45 the: there is competition but it's all about how you feel about it (.) how
 46 you take it because I: do I really feel close to the others (.) there are
 47 people who I like more than others but I I'm happy with the
 48 atmosphere with the people because before entering here they told me
 49 oh sslmit oh my god no you don't have to do that ((whispered awed
 50 voice)) well I like it oh competition too much competition ((repeated
 51 whispered awed voice)) but I I don't feel that way I I'm very happy to
 52 be here an:d so: (.) yes there is competition but it's all about how you
 53 take it so (.) it's not if you don't take it as a personal thing you you're
 54 happy with it
 55 Alan: how does everybody else feel about competition? The same or
 56 different?
 57 Rosa: Yeah kinda the same (..) there is competition but it's not a bad
 58 competition I think (.) cos like everybody helps each other it's not
 59 like I don't know I think it's good (..)
 60 Alan: Matteo (..)
 61 Matteo: well I:: I think that competitiveness erm: helps you improve (.)
 62 because well I think the sslmit prepares you er: to:: to do work that
 63 you will meet after the university
 64 Alan: hmm
 65 Matteo: and so:: (...) you: here at the sslmit you're trained (.) an::d I think
 66 it's a:: a good thing (.) bu::t I just don't like the the atmosphere in
 67 the classroom so much cos you:: are always I or at least I think you're
 68 quite always judged by the others cos mm:: not not not everyone not
 69 not all the students in the in the classroom but (..) well you always
 70 meet someone who who thinks he's better than you or: or so an:d but
 71 (.) it's not er:: I think it's not a good thing but it helps me improve (.)
 72 and so I just take the the good things out of it (.)

(Group 1 interview. Recording time: 00:08.26 – 00:13.25. See appendix A:
p.412, lines 191 – 302)

7.7.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

The narrative is set in an interpreting lesson in the classroom. The characters in Maria's narrative are herself, as the main protagonist, 'two people' (line 2), who are the teachers carrying out the interpreting exercise, and 'the other people' (line 2), the other students present in the scene.

Maria describes the interpreting event as being 'emotional' (line 1), positioning the other students (indexed by the plural subject pronoun 'they', line 3) as being potential critics when she makes mistakes in her interpreting between the two languages ('they understand', lines 3-4). Interestingly, the two teachers are not positioned as being important in the scene, the focus is on Maria and her peers.

Through the use of reported speech Maria positions the students as being polite and helpful, as indexed by the use of the modal auxiliary verb 'might' in her reporting of their comments on her interpreting,

4 ... ah well I might have said it in
5 another way

This perhaps represents a shift in scene to outside the classroom, after the interpreting exercise, as it would seem that the other students would not be commenting extensively on her performance in the classroom.

In the interpreting exercise Maria describes, she positions herself as being focused more on her own performance rather than on the other students (and teachers, who are not even mentioned). She positions herself as being unaffected by the other characters in the classroom then, calmly considering alternative language forms to correct her

own mistakes during the event itself, as though she were in a quiet meditative space rather than in the heat and pressure of the classroom interpreting exercise,

5 other things come up through your
6 mind and you say oh: that was the word but that's fine

Maria describes her thoughts on her own language usage as almost emerging slowly during the interpreting exercise. For example, words are not described as *popping* into her mind or *flashing* before her, but rather they 'come up' through her mind (lines 5-6), allowing her time to reflect on possible mistakes ('oh that was the word') and yet not see those mistakes as a source of anxiety ('but that's fine'). Maria positions herself therefore as being agentive and autonomous, not needing the other students (or teachers) to improve her performance, as well as being in control and not subject to panicking as she interprets in front of the class.

After my question to the group about what sort of atmosphere there is in the classroom, and whether students get support from their peers (lines 10-12), Silvia introduces 'competition' into the talk. The use of the contrastive conjunction 'but', in 'there's competition but there's also support' (line 13), initially suggests that competition is being contrasted to support, however Silvia goes on through reported speech to position her peers' competitiveness as actually supporting learning processes (lines 13-17). This reported speech might be seen as coming from the same scene that Maria has introduced, the interpreting lesson, but it could equally be seen as developing and broadening that scene to all the students' classroom experiences in general.

Through her use of reported speech Silvia positions the students as being less helpful and supportive than Maria has done, suggesting that they are presumptuous ('it's not that way it's this way', reported with a tone of condescension, line 14) and/or arrogantly dismissive ('that's wrong', reported with a tone of disregard, line 16). However, Silvia does not wholly challenge Maria's positive positioning, describing the atmosphere as being nevertheless 'happy' (line 17).

Maria's following turn sees her describing the atmosphere as also being 'relaxed' (line 18), an adjective which summarises her own previous description of her classroom interpreting experience, and which is immediately ratified by Sara, 'yeah relaxed' (line 23).

My suggestion that the group might not ratify Maria and Silvia's positioning of the students, as being generally positive in the interpreting class ('yeah everybody feels that?' lines 20-21), elicits a hesitant ratification by Rosa ('yeah I think so', line 23). Silvia then comes in to further ratify her initial positioning with more positive adjectives, describing students as being 'excited' (line 25) and 'motivated' (line 27). Both Maria and Silvia therefore jointly construct classes as being competitive in a positive way, and their own characters as being relaxed and happy in relation to competition in general.

Federico however, challenges this positive portrayal of competition in the class (lines 31-43). He describes competition as being 'weird' (line 33) and 'exaggerated' (line 35), and unsuited to his character, 'it's not for me' (line 32). Although he describes class comments as being mostly 'justified' (line 35), positioning some students as 'people who really know what they are saying' (lines 35-36), unlike Maria and Silvia, he positions the collective *character* of his peers in the story as 'presumptuous' and 'mocking' (line 39) in their criticisms of his mistakes.

Silvia returns in the following turn (line 44), reaffirming the classroom scene as being a happy one, but qualifying it as being so for those students who know how to 'take it' (lines 45-46), where 'it' presumably refers to competition again. The *character* of the students in the class, initially portrayed as a unified whole by Silvia, is now divided into two, those who know how to take competition and those who do not. Silvia then introduces a second, 'embedded narrative' (see chapter 6, section 6.2 for a definition). Before continuing with my level one analysis of the main narrative (see section 7.7.2), I examine this embedded narrative, through a level one and two analysis, as it serves to clarify Silvia's positioning of the students into two types.

7.7.1.1 Silvia's embedded narrative

In her embedded narrative (lines 48-52), Silvia presents two scenes, one *outside* the institution, prior to entering it, and the other in the institution. In these two scenes, which are compared and contrasted, Silvia presents herself as two characters, her former pre-institutional self, and her institutional self in the present. The other *character* in this narrative is the undefined collective group of individuals who Silvia talked to before entering the institution. Through reported speech the character of this group, outside the institution, position her as not being a suitable candidate for the institution itself, 'oh sslmit oh my god oh no you don't have to do' (line 49), which Silvia reports herself as rebuffing in the role of her pre-institutional character, 'well I like it' (line 50). The group's reason is then reported in the pre-institutional scene again, 'oh too much competition oh too much competition' (line 50), where the repetition of the phrase 'too much competition' serves to highlight the heightened level of competition associated with the institution, and to position Silvia as not having the right identity to fit in there. Silvia's institutional character then responds by confirming that she was right to rebuff them, as 'I don't feel that way I I'm very happy to be here' (lines 51-52), enforcing her positioning of herself as having the right identity to manage the competition.

The reason for telling this narrative then appears to be to reinforce Silvia's positioning of herself to the group and myself, as one of those characters in the class who knows how to take competition (her institutional character confirming what her pre-institutional character is described as already knowing), and not someone who is prone to 'take it personally' (i.e. someone who doesn't take comments from other students on her mistakes personally).

7.7.2 Level 1 analysis continued

Returning to the main narrative, after this embedded narrative, I ask the question 'how does everybody else feel about competition?' (line 55), Rosa joins with Silvia and Maria in portraying it as being positive, aligning herself with the character of those

students who know how to take it, and echoing Silvia's point that students give help and support.

58 ... cos like everybody helps each other

In the final two turns of this stretch of dialogue (lines 61-72), Matteo enters the discussion. His initial comments introduce competition as a factor in helping students improve their studies as well as preparing them for work after university (echoing a comment that Silvia had made before the narrative)

61 well I:: I think that competitiveness erm: helps you improve (.)
62 because well I think the sslmit prepares you er: to:: to do work that
63 you will meet after the university

Matteo conflates competitiveness with the institution itself, as seen by his substitution of 'competitiveness' (line 61) with 'sslmit' (line 62); competitiveness 'helps you improve' and sslmit 'prepares you to do work' (presumably preparing you for competition in the work place).

Seemingly picking up on Federico's negative positioning of the students in general though, Matteo divides the character of the class into a different binary from Silvia, positioning one group of students as thinking they are better and 'judging' (line 68) the others, and another who do not, aligning himself with the latter and criticising the former for creating a bad atmosphere (whilst acknowledging that they help him improve, in line with his initial assertion)

69 (..) well you always
70 meet someone who who thinks he's better than you or: or so an:d but
71 (..) it's not er:: I think it's not a good thing but it helps me improve (.)

7.7.3 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

The principal narrative emerges from talk about the participants' experiences of interpreting in front of the class, where Silvia comments about how it is good practice for the students' future careers in the world of work. When I ask Silvia 'how it feels' to interpret in front of a class Silvia replies that she hasn't in actual fact done it yet but that she knows those who have, indicating Maria by her direction of gaze. I then repeat the question to Maria who introduces the narrative of her own experience.

Maria positions herself as an informant for both the group and myself on the experience of interpreting in front of a class, introducing her awareness of her peers monitoring of her performance as relevant to that experience. When I subsequently ask the other participants in the group about the 'atmosphere' in the class, with regard to their fellow students in the interpreting lesson, I affirm Maria's introduction of the other students as being salient for discussion. My final question, 'is there support?' positions the group as needing to ratify or not Maria's underlying assumption that there is (as she has positioned her peers in the classroom as providing polite suggestions for correcting her 'mistakes').

Silvia's turn shows her as not wholly ratifying Maria's positioning. She introduces student 'competition', which initially appears to be in contrast with notions of support. Her reported speech of the students' comments challenges Maria's earlier portrayal of them as polite and helpful, highlighting a more negative side to their error correction (at times patronising and dismissive) and positioning the group as ratifying this. However, towards the end of her turn she does align herself with Maria's earlier positioning in part, by describing the atmosphere as 'happy', which Maria in turn immediately ratifies again.

My question 'yeah everybody feels that' (lines 20-21) positions the group as potentially not ratifying Silvia and Maria's claim about the class atmosphere again. Federico takes my direction of gaze (towards him) as an indication that I am inviting him to contribute to the discussion, functioning as a voiceless cue perhaps, as it potentially reminds him of his negative comments made to me in his first one-to-one

interview. Indeed, Federico's initial phrase seems to ratify this positioning as though he were responding to a direct, verbal request by myself in relation to talk in that earlier interview, 'yes I told you that I feel weird' (line 31). Federico challenges Maria and Silvia's positioning of the group as affirming the positive side of student competitiveness, but he also positions himself as potentially being alone in this ('it's not for me', line 32) and seeking a broader consensus from them. Federico aligns himself with Silvia's initial positioning of the students by giving verbal expression to what she had suggested prosodically, as their being 'presumptuous' and 'mocking', offering this more serve criticism for ratification from the group.

Silvia's subsequent turn challenges Federico by positioning herself as one of those students who knows how to take competition in the class, and Federico as one of those students who does not, hence his finding the class atmosphere negative. Her embedded story of her pre-institutional and institutional characters serves to further reinforce her character as someone who knows how to 'take it', because she doesn't take competition 'personally', positioning Federico as the other character again, someone who does take it personally and is therefore unhappy.

Rosa aligns herself with Silvia and Maria, describing students as giving help and support in class competition, and positioning herself as one of Silvia's characters who know how to 'take it' as well.

Matteo however, does not ratify Silvia's positioning of students as being two types, those who 'know how to take it' and 'those who don't', and neither does he ratify Federico's positioning of all the students as being 'presumptuous' and 'mocking'. Matteo rather divides the students into those who are overly critical and competitive, and think they are better than you, and those who are not, positioning himself as the latter. Matteo then describes the character of those students who are critical and competitive as having both a negative and positive effect on him, negative because of the bad classroom atmosphere they create, and positive because they help him improve his language studies. At the end of his turn, Matteo positions himself as being philosophic about the scene he has described, just taking 'the good things out of it'

(line 73) and leaving the rest, positioning the other participants as ratifying his approach.

7.7.4 Level 3 analysis: Connecting levels one and two to Discourses

There is a general consensus among all the participants in this extended co-constructed narrative that Sslmit students are in competition to show that they are better than others (to a lesser or greater extent) in their knowledge of foreign languages. The work of positioning, both in the narrative event and the narrative-telling event, is not to refute this implicitly shared perception, but in explaining how it emerges in the classroom, whether it has a positive or a negative effect on language learning processes, how it affects relations between students, and how it impacts on the general class ‘atmosphere’ (making it a desirable or undesirable student attribute in the classroom).

The driving force behind wanting to be better than one’s peers is perhaps a shared factor in many learning environments, however it appears here as a particularly intensely debated subject, specifically linked to language learning and language performance in the classroom (i.e. impressing one’s peers by correcting their errors). This is supported by repeated talk about student competition across all the research data in relation to language (see sections 7.8 – 7.12.5 below), and in some cases an alignment between it and the *nature* of the institution itself (as exemplified by Matteo’s conflation of the two, see section 7.7.2). My participants appear to be influenced by two Discourses, mentioned previously, the interpreter as a language expert (see chapter 5, section 5.2.5), and the neo-liberal Discourse which sees the institution positioning students as being the ‘best of the best...the crème della crème’ (see chapter 5, sections 5.2.6 – 5.2.7) and potentially influencing their need to perform accordingly in the classroom (showing they are better than their peers).

These Discourses can be seen as creating an atmosphere conducive to very elevated levels of competition among the student population, which appear to have corresponding repercussions on the classroom atmosphere. The drive to be worthy of

the title of being the best (hence a valid member of the *best* institution) combined with an orientation to be a language expert, with displays of language ability as a marker of future interpreter potential, seems to be central to this heightened competitiveness in the Sslmit classroom.

I now go on to represent more data relevant to the theme of competition, and draw more extended relevancies regarding the influence of these Discourses.

7.8 Competition between first and second language students: Matteo's first 'Erasmus' narrative

Although most of the participants' talk about competition in the previous narrative analysed (section 7.7) was concerned with their shared classroom experiences with their fellow students, studying the same language at the same level, talk also emerged of competition between students of the same language studied but at different levels. I now present two inter-related narrative episodes from the first group interview where this emerged. As previously, I present the entire extract below and then go on to analyse it using narrative positioning.

- 1 Silvia: well no not quite (.) I think we all agree it's different f- for him
2 maybe because I know that erm in the german class there's more
3 competition or competitiveness I don't know how to say it erm
4 than in the other languages of course English ((small laugh)) but
5 English is more relaxed german class because I have er:: my er
6 flatmate has as first language german and she: tells me a lot of things
7 and they they really are very I don't know how to say it in English
8 but erm:: (.) they are more precise or pignoli ((Italian)) I don't know
9 er: [they feel
10 Alan: [fussy perhaps
11 Silvia: yeah they feel the competition they feel they are god ((a little laughter))
12 and so [they
13 Alan: [that's interesting they feel like they're god

14 Silvia: yeah (.) they are they think they are ((laughs)) they're not but er:: I
 15 don't know why bu: I I heard a lot about german class [I don't know if
 16 Maria: [xxxxxxx
 17 Matteo: it depends on the fir:: on the first language
 18 Silvia: yeah
 19 Matteo: because yes er::m I found that erm: er:: the students who have for
 20 example german as first language (.) well they: I think that (.) they
 21 think they are better than the than the other ((federico laughs)) students
 22 cos well german is a difficult language
 23 Silvia: yeah [exactly
 24 Matteo: [an::d
 25 the English language is the the easy one the language that all all the
 26 world know (.) knows and so
 27 Silvia: you know Spanish is similar to Italian ((adopts a sing-song tone))
 28 French Oh French come on ((adopts tone suggesting it's not to be
 29 taken very seriously)) you just end the sentence with something
 30 like yeah:: or I don't know ((small laugh)) and that's fren:ch so:
 31 german german that's different that's the way of thinking here but I
 32 don't really care about it because I don't (.) I don't have german
 33 ((little laugh)) ((others laugh)) as my language so I I have a lot of
 34 (..) I don't know of friends but not very friend but in the german class so
 35 Alan: there's nobody here who has german as they're second language?
 36 Matteo [(xx)
 37 Rosa: [(us two)
 38 Matteo: we have (.)
 39 we have german as [a second language
 40 Rosa: [as second
 41 language but not the first
 42 Alan: and do you feel the same the same thing that german the german
 43 students have this attitude?
 44 Matteo: no I think that it's just an attitude of the students who have er::
 45 german as first language
 46 Alan: just first language?

47 Matteo: yes (.) just first language cos you they I think they think well erm::
 48 to get in the sslmit you have to know to you have to know the
 49 german really well for example when I:: I:: did an exam last last no
 50 December last January er:: I met a girl and she:: she I think she has
 51 german as first language and we were just talking about the erasmus
 52 programme (.) an:d well em:: I:: I applied for the for the erasmus
 53 programme and I have chosen erm: a german a german city to to
 54 study there and well and this this girl just said well (but) you it
 55 doesn't matter this well the city doesn't matter for students of who
 56 has erm (.) for students who have german as second language cos
 57 you just have to learn german (.) e: but we er:m but we need to go to
 58 universities like Heidelberg and mannsheim and they're quite prestigious
 59 they are like the ssmlit in germany
 60 Alan: ah ha
 61 Matteo: and (..) and I think it's it's not true cos I think that the level of of of
 62 german taught in the: in the class of first language and second
 63 languages I think it's quite the same (.) and for example we have
 64 erm:: the the teacher who erm:: who::
 65 Rosa: (xxxxxx)
 66 ((whispers inaudibly to matteo))
 67 Matteo: yes erm the teacher of the of the second language class is elena
 68 moscato and it's one and I think she is one of the best interpreters
 69 in the (.) in italy as least [I think cos she
 70 Rosa: [well that's
 71 what she presented herself as ((general laughter))
 72 Matteo: yes ((laughs))
 73 Rosa: we don't know if it's true or not ((matteo, Roxanne and matteo laugh))

(Group 1 interview. Recording time: 00:13.37 – 00:17.58. See appendix A: p.416,
 lines 308 – 419)

7.8.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

In this extract there are two narratives, albeit interrelated, Silvia's (lines 1-15) and Matteo's (lines 49-59).

The scene described by Silvia is the 'German class' (line 2), which she portrays as being 'more competitive' (lines 2-3) than other language classes, in particular more than English classes (line 4). Silvia then introduces the character of her 'flatmate', who is studying German as a first language, and who acts as an informant for her assertion that the character of German language students is more 'pignoli' (line 8), (meaning 'fussy' and 'attentive to detail'). The German students' *character* is presented in the singular, representative of all German students, and is positioned as being more competitive than other language students, which is subsequently expressed as feeling 'they are god' (line 11). The metaphor of omniscience positions the German students as behaving in a superior manner to students of other languages (although Silvia refutes this is a personal aside, 'they think they are...they're not', line 14).

Matteo comes in, in the subsequent turn (line 17), not entirely challenging Silvia's description of German students, but changing the generalised character in her story to students of 'German as a first language' (line 20). Matteo positions these students (and not 'all' German students) as thinking that they are 'better than the other students' of other languages (lines 21), due to the difficulty of learning the German language as well as its smaller global diffusion, comparing it to English which 'is the easy one the one the language that all all the world know' (lines 25-26).

Ratifying Matteo's positioning of German first language students, Silvia begins the next turn (line 27) by voicing the German students through reported speech as though they were belittling the other languages, in terms of effort in language learning. Spanish is described as being close to Italian, French only requires small suffix changes (from Italian presumably) but German 'that's different' (line 31).

In the subsequent exchange with me, Matteo identifies himself as a German second language student, attributing the attitude of superiority to those students of German as

a first language only (excluding himself from that positioning therefore). Matteo then initiates a narrative, a personal story of an encounter with a German first language female student. The scene is set as just before or after a German exam (Matteo does not specify which). In this narrative Matteo uses reported speech to voice the character of the German student as being dismissive of the importance of Matteo's going to certain German universities for his Erasmus programme, universities which Matteo subsequently defines as 'prestigious' (line 58) as 'they are like the Sslmit in germany' (line 59), (positioning Sslmit as an institution with high prestige in the academic world).

In the reported exchange with the other student, Matteo positions her as considering herself to be superior to him due to his being a student of German as a second language.

54 this girl just said well (but) you it
 55 doesn't matter this well the city doesn't matter for students of who
 56 has erm (.) for students who have german as second language cos
 57 you just have to learn german (..) e: but we er:m but we need to go to
 58 universities like Heidelberg and mannsheim

Matteo's response to this reported speech contextualises the girl's positioning herself as being superior to him, as being related to language competence. He however, refutes the suggestion that his 'level of german' is inferior. To further ratify this Matteo introduces the character of the German second language teacher, Elena Moscato, to support his assertion. Matteo introduces Moscato as an authoritative figure, positioning her as being 'one of the best interpreters in Italy' (lines 68-69), to support his assertion that second language students are not linguistically inferior to first. However, before Matteo can describe her more, his narrative is interrupted by Rosa (line 70), who refuses to ratify Moscato as being 'one of the best', reporting the teacher as telling the class that she was, but positioning her as potentially exaggerating her importance to the other students (see chapter 5, sections 5.2 – 5.2.9, for an analysis of a narrative where Rosa's positioning of Moscato is explored in more detail).

7.8.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

The narratives emerge after a previous narrative, where the participants talk about competition among Sslmit students (see section 7.7). Matteo has described the class atmosphere as being ‘bad’, and positions some students as judging him negatively and thinking they are better than him. I then comment that there appear to be negative things about competition, and Silvia indicates that she might not agree with me (making a facial expression which I interpreted as communicating this). When I invited her to talk she introduced her narrative (section 7.8).

In the narrative-telling event, Silvia positions Matteo as being different from other members in the group, as he is a student of German and thus experiences competition differently from the others (her affirmation being that competition is more accentuated among students of German). Silvia also positions Matteo as being potentially like the students of German she is describing, ‘fussy’ (pignoli) as well as arrogant (highlighted by her description of all German students as ‘feeling like god’).

Matteo refuses to ratify this positioning of him however, as not being part of the group and having the characteristics Silvia attributes to all German students. He does not challenge her characterisation of ‘German students’ but specifies that she is referring to ‘students of German as a first language’, ratifying her assertion that ‘these’ students feel superior to other language students but that he (as a second language student) cannot be included.

Matteo’s introduction of his own narrative, of talking to a German first language student about Erasmus placements, serves to position him as the victim of unfair bias, in that German first language students would stop him from applying to prestigious German universities because they judge his level of language as being inferior to theirs. By introducing the character of Moscato, Matteo attempts to position himself as having equal language status with German first language students. However, this is challenged by Rosa who questions his claim that she is ‘one of the best interpreters in Italy’ (lines 68-69), positioning the group as not ratifying it by suggesting that this was

Moscato's own subjective claim which 'we don't know (if) it's true or not' (line 73), where the plural pronoun 'we' indexes the whole group.

7.8.3 Level 3 analysis: Connecting levels one and two to Discourses

Matteo's narrative appears to invoke a neo-liberal Discourse in HE institutions (see section 5.2.7), which can be seen as positioning students in an educational *market*, a market where institutions manoeuvre for greater amounts of 'capital' (Bourdieu, 1977, see section 2.5.3) to raise their national/international status and attract more students.

The German universities, which Matteo is considering for his Erasmus placement (Heidelberg and Mannheim), are described as

58 ... quite prestigious

59 they are like the sslmit in germany

This positions Sslmit as having a particular prestige, akin to other German universities, which echoes the institutional talk about Sslmit students being 'the best' (see section 5.2.6). The 'capital' that such institutions have, emerges in Matteo's narrative as being connected to language competency in a second language, suggesting that these institutions only accept foreign students who are 'the best' in that language, invoking another Discourse that interpreters are language experts. Matteo frames his *right* to go to the top German universities by claiming a language *level* equivalent, or higher, to students of German as a first language. His recourse to concepts of *level*, places language on a recognisable scale of achievement, and appears to reference the European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), (something which becomes much more evident in another of his narratives, see section 7.10, below). Thus, there appears to be an implicit understanding that interpreters are like language students, whose abilities can be graded in relation to their knowledge of language, and who are expected to move up to native-like 'proficiency' levels.

In their positioning of German first language students as feeling superior, Matteo and Maria both seem to invoke other forms of ‘capital’ related to the positioning of German as having more prestige than other languages. German is described as having less global reach, in that it is a language that few people know (unlike English), as well as being a language that is harder to learn for Italian students (the majority of students in Sslmit). The suggestion here is that German is a more limited resource that students have to work harder to acquire, and more prestigious for this reason. From this Bourdieusian perspective (see chapter 2, section 2.5.3) the more limited a resource is, and the harder it is to acquire, the more capital it attains in its field. I look in more detail at Bourdieu’s concepts in chapter 9, where I present my overall findings in the research and their relation to Discourses in general.

I now turn to look at another two of Matteo’s narratives (sections 7.9 and 7.10), which are interrelated (one being an extension of the other), again addressing the theme of competition in relation to students of German.

7.9 Second language students can be as good as first language students - Matteo’s second ‘Erasmus’ narrative

In his second one-to-one interview, Matteo returned to the subject of first and second language students of German. After informing me of attaining an Erasmus placement at a prestigious German university, I asked Matteo what was the reaction of students of German as a first language. What emerged were two separate but interrelated narratives which I present here, analysing both at levels one and two of narrative positioning (sections 7.9.1 - 7.9.2 and 7.10 - 7.10.2, respectively) before going on to a level three analysis (section 7.11).

1 Alan: and now you have a (.) a scholarship [to go to

2 Matteo: [yeah

3 Alan: was there any reaction there from these people?

4 Matteo: ye:s (.) erm: during the receiving (ours) hours hours of the of our

5 erasmus co-ordinator of the co-ordinator of the: (.) erm german of
 6 the (.) germany a:::nd (...) well of germany in general (..) erm well
 7 there were 2 or 3 students of german first language and well sh- they
 8 were very angry because students of german as second language won
 9 er: scholarships for hidelberg er: wien ((vienna in german)) er:
 10 (germasheim?) and these are all and munchen and they are 4 of the
 11 hm: 4 great universities for interpreters and they were very angry
 12 because they they said it's not possible we are german first language
 13 (..) well our language proficiency is better than (..) er: than second
 14 lang- than students of (..) than the proficiency of students of german
 15 as second language (..) and well and what surprised me (..) is that the
 16 (..) even the professor said well it's been (..) you're right it's not
 17 possible (..) because she because he: he: thought that (..) well (...) it's
 18 right he as- he assumed that the language proficiency of the student
 19 of the second of the student of german as second language was m:
 20 infer- inferior? ((incredulous tone))
 21 Alan: hm
 22 Matteo: of the: (.) of the proficiency of the: than the proficiency of the
 23 student of the german as a first language (..) and I think it's quite
 24 crazy because (..) the: professor moscato said that (..) our level was
 25 higher (..) than german first language (..) so (..)

(Matteo 2 interview. Recording time: 01:16:11 – 01:18:45. See appendix: p.574, lines 1202 – 1243)

7.9.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

The scene Matteo describes takes place during the receiving hours of the Erasmus co-ordinator for the German department. The initial characters are Matteo, '2 or 3' students of German as a first language (line 7), and the co-ordinator, who is also a German professor in the institution.

Matteo describes the students as being ‘very angry’ (line 8) due to students of German as a second language winning scholarships to ‘four of the great universities for interpreters’ (lines 10-11). Matteo positions himself as being the object of this anger, as he is one of those students of German as a second language who has gained entrance to one of the ‘great German universities’.

Matteo introduces reported speech to voice the students of German as a first language,

- 12 because they they said it's not possible we are german first language
- 13 (.) well our language proficiency is better than (..) er: than second
- 14 lang- than students of (.) than the proficiency of students of german
- 15 as second language

Matteo's reported speech positions the students as not expecting any competition for places at the ‘great universities’, as their language proficiency is better than German second language students. Matteo then reports the professor's reaction to this, which is to ratify the students' assertion, ‘you're right it's not possible’ (lines 16-17). Matteo however, challenges both the students' and the professor's positioning of him as not having the same level of proficiency in the language. He reports his reaction to the professor's comments as being one of surprise, because the professor ‘assumed’ (line 18) that second language German students were ‘inferior’ (line 20), positioning the professor as holding false beliefs (that German second language students have a lower language level) and Matteo as knowing better (that he is as good as German first language students). Matteo also describes the professor's assumption as being ‘crazy’ (line 24), positioning the professor not only as being wrong but also as not being in contact with the *real* world. Matteo then changes scene to an undefined place, probably the interpreting classroom, and introduces the character of another German professor, Moscato (the same teacher that he introduced as being ‘one of the best interpreters in Italy’ in the first group interview, see section 7.7). Moscato is reported as telling second language students that their level was higher than German first language students. Matteo therefore introduces Moscato as a means of challenging the first professor's assumption, and ratifying his own claim that he has an equal if not ‘higher’ level in German than first language students.

7.9.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

The narrative emerges from talk about Matteo winning an Erasmus place at Bonn university in Germany. Matteo describes this as being a very important step in improving his German, which he describes as being much weaker than his English. He then talks about how Sslmit is important because it offers many more Erasmus placements than other institutions. I remind him of his earlier narrative in the first group interview about German first language students thinking that he shouldn't go to the top German institutions. The narrative emerges from this.

Regarding the positioning of the participants in the narrative-telling event, the researcher has no verbal interaction with Matteo during the telling of his narrative, apart from back channelling sounds expressing encouragement that he should continue. However, as an English teacher in the institution, I am positioned by Matteo as ratifying his assertion that students of German, both as a first and second language, should not in actual fact be in competition for Erasmus placements as they potentially have the same proficiency in the language. The introduction of the character of Moscato can be seen as a way of further convincing me that he is right, as she is positioned as an ultimate judge of language proficiency in German. By introducing a colleague of mine in the institution, Matteo positions me as a teacher then who will respect that colleagues evaluation of her students' language level, and ratify Matteo's claim to have the same level as his first language German peers.

7.10 Matteo's third 'Erasmus' narrative

Matteo's next narrative comes immediately after his first, and I present the transcript of it below, going on to analyse it through levels one and two again.

- 1 Matteo: so (.) and there was another episode that was I think it
2 quite quite funny because (.) well to: apply for the: for for the
3 scholarship you: have to certify a B1 level (.)

4 Alan: hm m

5 Matteo: and so I had to certify a B1 level in german language (..) but I was a
6 beginner (.) a:nd (..) and this professor er:: got well I I I wrote him an
7 e-mail saying that well (.) erm last year er the things were not this
8 way the the things were different WHY? now (.) you well why do
9 you want a B1 language when I will ah: I will leave in in September?
10 so there's plenty of time for improving (.) a:nd and well he said no::
11 it's not possible because our reputation is high and we can't send
12 beginners to germ- to ok but (..) there's plenty of time if we are here
13 (.) I think that it means that we want to study we want to improve we:
14 (..) well and (.) I didn't say (.) the thing that I will say now but (.) I
15 thought that (.) this is my second bachelor degree (.) I want to study
16 because there are not so many students who er just get a second
17 bachelor degree if I'm here it's because I want to study I want to
18 improve I want to learn er: german (.) a:nd and well (.) but well I
19 studied I got the B1 level I applied i: (.) I won the scholarship and the
20 professor said (.) oh (.) you did it (.) yes I did it (.) a:nd (.) well now
21 he's he's very kind he's (..) very great person and but the other
22 students are ve:ry angry very very angry (.)

(Matteo 2 interview. Recording time: 01:18:46 – 01:21:13. See appendix A:
p.575, lines 1243 -1277)

7.10.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

Matteo introduces his character in the scene as requiring a 'B1 level' in German in order to apply for the Erasmus placement (Matteo refers to the placement as a 'scholarship' as he knows it provides funding, something he stated earlier in the interview). Matteo introduces a tension between his position as only being a 'beginner' and the institution's requirement that he has to be certified at a B1 level before he can apply.

The scene is introduced as an email exchange between himself and the Erasmus co-ordinator for the German department (mentioned in his previous narrative, section 7.9). He indexes the co-ordinator as a ‘professor’ (highlighting his academic role in the institution), identifying him as being personally responsible for the B1 requirement from applicants this year, and for changing the institutional position from the previous year, when ‘things were different’ (line 8). The prosodic overlay positions Matteo’s character in the narrative as being angry with the professor (indexed by the heightened stress on ‘WHY’ in his reported question, line 8). Matteo further positions the professor as being unreasonable for requiring the B1 level in the application stage and not allowing for his language development in the period leading up to the Erasmus placement in September. Matteo’s subsequent reported speech positions the professor as being worried about the institutions reputation abroad as ‘we can’t send beginners to germ(any)’ (lines 11-12). Matteo’s reported response positions all the students who are in Sslmit as evidently wanting to study and improve their languages (indexed by the plural subject pronoun ‘we’ in ‘we want to study’, ‘we want to improve’, line 13), and positioning the institution as a place where this is expected, but the professor however as not acknowledging this. Matteo then introduces a more personal description of himself as someone who is doing his second degree, which he uses to position himself further as being even more likely to study and improve his German than the other students, as he has already successfully studied and acquired a degree in the past.

The final part of his narrative presents a summary of his achievements (given in quick succession, suggesting a check-list of goals set and then met) which position the professor as being wrong in his initial assumptions about Matteo remaining a beginner, and unlikely to get his Erasmus placement, and Matteo as being right

18 ... but well I

19 studied I got the B1 level I applied i: (.) I won the scholarship

The professor is then reported as being surprised

20 ... (the) professor said oh (.) you did it (.) yes I did it (.)

and showing Matteo greater regard

21... (well now) he's he's very kind

whilst the students of German as a first language are left being 'very angry' (line 22), emphasised by a repetition of the phrase, together with a repetition of the adverb 'very'.

Matteo's overall positioning in this narrative then is of someone who is determined and agentive in his approach to his language studies and his ability to meet his goals, even when he considers them to be unfair.

7.10.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

The narrative emerges as a progression from Matteo's previous narrative where he positions himself as having the same level of German as students of German as a first language, challenging the German professor's positioning of him as not. His second narrative serves as a vehicle to prove that he was right, as it further positions the German professor as being wrong about his ability to study and improve in order to meet the language requirements for the Erasmus placement.

Again here, I have no verbal exchange with Matteo but I am positioned as a witness to Matteo's success, and as implicitly ratifying Matteo's positioning of himself as being capable of challenging the unfair categorisation of his level of German as inferior, by fellow peers and professors, by merit of his ability to study hard.

7.11 Level 3 analysis – Discourses in Matteo’s second and third ‘Erasmus’ narratives

In Matteo’s second narrative the neo-liberal Discourse of HE institutions appears to be invoked again (see section 7.8.3), as exemplified by the German professor’s reluctance to send Matteo to one of the top German universities

11 because our reputation is high and we can’t send

12 beginners

which positions Matteo as not having enough ‘capital’ (in the form of second language knowledge) for the top end of the HE market, which Sslmit is positioned as being part of by both Matteo and the German professor.

The ‘capital’ that such institutions have, emerges in both Matteo’s narratives as being connected to language competency, which is clearly framed in the third narrative by Matteo’s positioning of himself within the European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), initially describing himself as a ‘beginner’ (line 6) but needing to be ‘certified’ at a ‘B1 level’ (line 3). Matteo describes the requisite of a ‘B1 level’ as originating from the German professor, which shows that the institutional representatives actively invoke language levels and position students in relation to them. Furthermore, these levels index a scale of progression towards ‘proficiency’, C2 level in the CEFR, or near native speaker status. This is borne out in the department’s website which defines students’ ‘knowledge and understanding’ objectives as attaining a ‘C1 level’ by their third year (see chapter one, section 1.2).

Moreover, Matteo’s narrative positions institutional representatives (in the character of the German professor as the Erasmus co-ordinator) as applying these levels rigidly in their evaluations of students’ language competence within the institution, and the students’ potential to ‘represent’ the institution on the *HE market* with other ‘top’ institutions (i.e. the great German universities).

Although Sslmit expresses the goal that all its students will attain a common C1 level in both their first and second languages by the end of the third year (see chapter one, section 1.2), Matteo's third narrative suggests that this is not what teachers actually expect of them, as the German professor is positioned as being sceptical that Matteo can even attain a B1 level by his second year (when the institution sends its students on Erasmus). Through his narrative Matteo positions himself as challenging this perception of him by the institutional figure of the German professor, showing that he is able to attain the level set, as exemplified by his *success story* in acquiring a 'B1 level' and an Erasmus placement at a top German university.

In the following sections of this chapter I look at how my participants (re)positioned themselves with regard to competitiveness in the classroom in their second term.

7.12 Participant (re-)positioning in relation to competitiveness across the data - Introduction.

In the second session of interviews the theme of competition emerged again, albeit principally elicited by myself, often introduced through direct questions to the participants. This elicitation was due to a wish to explore the theme of competition more, as it had emerged so strongly in the first session of interviews, where it was principally unsolicited, and to see how the participants positioned themselves over time. In the following sections I examine how each participant (re)positioned him/herself towards competition in the institution then.

7.12.1 Silvia's positioning in relation to competitiveness

In the second session of interviews, made during the final exam period at the end of the academic year, I asked Silvia if she still thought that competition in the class was a positive thing or if she had changed her mind. Silvia responded in the following way

- 1 Silvia: hm no (.) at the end I know the people who are into competition (.)
2 too much into competition I know people who aren't and I know how
3 to deal with them (.) all of them it's just I think it's all about knowing
4 how to deal with different people ...

(Silvia 2 interview. See appendix: p.642, lines 683 – 689)

In contrast with her positioning in the first group interview (see section 7.7), where Silvia positioned students into two groups, those that can take competition and those that cannot, here she talks about those students who are 'too much into competition' (line 2). She therefore aligns herself with Matteo's similar positioning of students in the first group interview (see section 7.7), placing more emphasis on the negative aspect of competition in the institution.

Silvia's earlier division of students in the first group interview, positioned all the students as engaging in competition among themselves, but coping with that competition in different ways. However, this has shifted to identifying two different groups, those who 'know how to deal with them' (lines 2-3) and those who do not (where the pronoun 'them' refers to students who are 'too much into competition'). In this new dichotomy of the student population Silvia positions herself as belonging to the former, 'I know how to deal with them' (lines 2-3). Competition has therefore shifted from being a generally shared experience, which students can or cannot take, to one of degree, where some students are 'too much' into it, and others not. Silvia no longer sees competition as a thing then that *everyone* has to 'deal with' but rather it is the need for one group to deal with another (i.e. those students who are too competitive).

7.12.2 Maria's positioning in relation to competitiveness

In Maria's interview in the second one-to-one session I asked her the same question as I asked Silvia, whether things had changed or not with regards to her seeing competition as being a positive thing. Maria responded

1 Maria: hmm yeah there is a lot of competition (.) a:nd (.) I think it's
 2 good there is cos you're gonna find it in a working environment
 3 there has to be competition (.) a:nd (2.0) I think I still think it's nice
 4 (.) it's not that bad everybody knows where your strong point is and
 5 where you can rely and where you cannot work that hard because
 6 you're really good with that but you know that you can help and ask
 7 help can ask for help to the other people (.)

(Maria 2 interview. See appendix A: p.518, lines 721 – 732)

Maria reinforces her position, as emerged in the earlier group narrative, that competition helps weaker students by providing help and support (lines 4-7), as well as preparing students for future work (line 2). When asked by me to talk specifically about the 'classroom' however, Maria says

1 Maria: the live cla- er: there are a couple of people in the whole (.)
 2 school that are (.) ((exhales)) that I can't stand sometimes because
 3 they they know a lot about the language but they want to show it

(Maria 2 interview. See appendix A: p.520, lines 786 – 790)

As with Silvia in her narrative, Maria identifies the character of a group of students as being overly competitive. Maria positions these students as not helping their fellow students but rather as being show-offs, people who know a lot about languages but 'want to show it' (line 3). She positions her own character as not being one of these, and as someone who 'can't stand' them (line 2).

When I subsequently ask Maria what her reaction is to these students she responds

1 Maria: we just don't listen to them if they're not interesting if they
 2 are then we take notes and then we say ok (.) can't stand you

(Maria 2 interview. See appendix A: p.524, lines 922 – 925)

Diversely from her comments on competition then in her first session interviews (see section 7.7), where the *collective character* of the other students is described as supportive, in her second session Maria divides that character into two, the minority class *show-offs* and the majority *non show-offs*. Maria positions herself as belonging to the latter group, positioning the former as being sometimes helpful (when the non show-offs ‘take notes’, line 2) but still strongly disliked and barely put up with by the *non show-offs* (who often say, ‘ok can’t stand you’, line 2).

Maria, like Silvia, positions some students as being too competitive, and highlights the need to ‘deal with them’ in order to maintain a positive atmosphere in the class.

7.12.3 Rosa’s positioning in relation to competitiveness

When I posed the same question to Rosa, in her second one-to-one interview, concerning the classroom atmosphere as having changed or not, she responded

- 1 Rosa: I think that erm (.) atmosphere here like the students is really
- 2 nice it’s really good (.) everybody tries to help each other out and if
- 3 you ask somebody help they help you it’s not like it’s not a bad
- 4 competition (2.0)

(Rosa 2 interview. See appendix A: p.584, lines 158 – 165)

As in her first group session interview (section 7.7), Rosa positions the *collective character* of the other students again as being helpful and supportive. However, rather than identifying herself as a protagonist who is aligned with this character, Rosa positions herself as being apart from it. Her non-native speaker status in an Italian University is used to position her as being at a disadvantage for competing with the other students

- 1 I still feel I am disadvantaged but I think maybe like after some
- 2 years I will be able to ((small laugh)) become like the one of them but

3 (.) right now yeah (.) still it's (.) a bit hard

(Rosa 2 interview. See appendix A: p.588, lines 281 – 286)

As her interpreting courses are always between another language and Italian, Rosa identifies herself as a character that is separate from the others, not 'one of them' (line 3) and unable to compete on a level playing field.

7.12.4 Matteo's positioning in relation to competitiveness

When Matteo is asked how he sees competitiveness in his second term (in his second one-to-one interview) he responds,

1 Matteo: (...) well I think the: (4.0) the competitiveness is just the same but
2 since we: (3.0) well (.) during the first semester we didn't do the
3 mediation so: we couldn't imagine how (.) in- (..) interpreting was (.)
4 and (.) since we have seen that the mediation itself the interpreting
5 job is (...) really difficult there's no: (..) you you just (..) there's no
6 room for competitiveness (..) e:::rm so: you just have to help the
7 other students

(Matteo 2 interview. See appendix A: p.564, lines 849 – 860)

Although Matteo initially appears to support his original comments about competition among students ('the competitiveness is just the same', line 1) he nevertheless describes it as being different in the second term. The two types of student from his previous narrative (section 7.7), those who judge and criticise and those who don't, have become one character in his second interview. This new character is shaped by there being 'no room for competitiveness' (lines 5-6) in the interpreting lessons of the second term. Matteo positions himself as having the same character as the other students in this new environment, where everyone has to help each other (lines 6-7).

7.12.5 Federico's positioning in relation to competitiveness

When I asked Federico about the 'competitive nature' of the classroom in his second one-to-one interview, which he described negatively in his first one-to-one and group interviews (see section 7.7), he responded

- 1 well probably (.) it's erm (.) probably less er (.) less of it because
- 2 people know each other better and er the: you know it's more of a: a
- 3 personal relation with the people (being) together for one year more or less

(Federico 2 interview. See appendix A: p.474, lines 205 – 210)

Federico's initial positioning of the character of students as 'mocking' and 'presumptuous' (section 7.7) changes in his second interview, where they are portrayed as less competitive due to stronger 'personal relation(s)' (line 3), and knowing 'each other better' (line 2). The negative positioning in the first session of interviews is not present in the second, and Federico makes no reference to the 'bad atmosphere' in the classroom that was previously marked.

7.13 Conclusions

The narratives that were analysed in this chapter focus on the relationships between students and their peers in the context of the institution, providing an insight into how Discourses influence the identities of the student-interpreter, and the changes that occur in those identities over time.

These narratives show how my participants position the identity of the Sslmit student as being overtly work and study orientated, allowing little to no time to devote to relaxation and the pursuit of 'fun' (i.e. enjoying other social aspects of university life). This identity is linked to neo-liberal Discourses which sees the institution as promoting itself as being the best for students wishing to find careers in interpreting,

and implicitly expecting students to attain high standards through their work and study in order to be entitled to claim the title of being among the best. The participants' narratives position the institution as playing an active role in shaping this identity, as Rosa's comment highlights when she implies that Sslmit makes students into 'nerds' (sections 7.2-7.3.3). Although this appears to be generally accepted by the other participants, it is not generally thought of as being a positive student-identity. Silvia challenges it for example (section 7.4), warning her fellow participants that they 'have to rest too' (line 2) and that there is 'not only sslmit we have whole life ok' (line 1), positioning the student-identity as potentially being self-harming by focusing too much on work and study, and risking their physical and mental health. Both Silvia and Marta (sections 7.4-7.41) attribute part of this identity to the way the institution is perceived as positioning them to perform as though they were already the best, taking for granted that they will work and study accordingly, to the highest of standards throughout their university careers.

Another aspect of the student-identity, which emerged through the narratives analysed, positions Sslmit students as being highly competitive. This can also be linked to neo-liberal Discourses in the institution and the onus on students to perform as though they are the best, which appears to play out in the classroom, with individuals vying to show themselves to be better than their peers. Furthermore, the Discourse of interpreters as language experts seems to underpin the nature of this competition, representing the high standard in language competence that students are seeking to compete in. The participants' positioning in relation to the competitive *nature* of the student-interpreter's identity within the institution is not uniform however, nor is it constant over time (as shown through differences between narratives in the first term in comparison to the second term, see sections 7.12 - 7.12.5). A general acknowledgement that all Sslmit students are competitive in the first session of interviews, is interpreted as being both positive and negative. On the positive side, competition is positioned by some as helping students improve their language skills (Silvia, Matteo and Maria's narratives) and preparing them for competition in the work place (Silvia and Matteo's narratives), however on the negative side it is positioned as creating a bad study environment in the classroom, creating tension between students (Federico and Matteo's narratives). By the second term (in those

narratives collected in the second session) the participants' positioning has changed. Silvia and Maria's initial positioning of competition as being almost exclusively positive has turned to identifying a small proportion of the student body as being 'too competitive' (Silvia) and 'show-offs' (Maria) which upsets the harmony of the classroom. Rosa's overall positive positioning of competition in the first term appears to remain the same, although she excludes herself from competing on the basis that she is not Italian, positioning it as something that only Italian students engage in. Both Matteo and Federico no longer adhere to the position that competition creates a bad classroom environment, attributing this alternatively to the *nature* of interpreting studies (requiring cooperation) and improved personal relationships between the students.

Another aspect that emerged through the narratives analysed, is that competition can be different between languages, as well as the level at which those languages are taught. Silvia's narrative that students of German are more competitive than students of English (see section 7.7), and Matteo's subsequent narratives on his experiences in applying for an Erasmus placement (see sections 7.8 – 7.11), invoke a Discourse that some languages are positioned as having greater 'capital' (see chapter 2, section 2.5.3) than others, capital which is positioned as being greater the more a language differs from Italian and the more limited it is with respect to global diffusion in the interpreting market. Matteo's differentiation between students of German as a first language of study and those as a second (his own), highlight a competition for places in the top German universities, which the former claim as their *right* based on a language expert Discourse of language proficiency as the ultimate deciding factor, and assumptions that 2nd language students are inferior in this respect. Matteo's reported speech of the German professor co-ordinating the Erasmus placements also invokes neo-liberal Discourses about Sslmit's high status in the academic market, as well as linking that status to language goals among the student population, portrayed as a necessity in order to represent the institution in similarly high status universities abroad.

Chapter 8

Data analysis

8.1 The role of teacher-student relations in shaping student-interpretor identities in the institution - Introduction

In this chapter I look at the relationships between students and their teachers in the context of the institution, and how these relationships seem to affect their perceptions of their identities as interpreting students. Through narrative positioning analysis I focus particularly on those narratives that were concerned principally with these relationships, and the ways in which the students perceive Sslmit as being different from other higher education institutions.

8.2 Teacher-student ratios and better learning: Matteo's narrative

The participants do not talk very much about teachers in their first one-to-one interviews, however Matteo and Silvia do. These two participants had already frequented other Italian university departments, Silvia having spent a year in Bologna's department for political sciences before leaving to enter Sslmit, and Matteo having acquired his first degree in 'oriental languages' at La Sapienza university in Rome before transferring to Forli to do his second degree at Sslmit (see chapter 3, section 3.3.1 for a brief biographical history of all the participants).

I begin this chapter by looking at the narratives which emerged in Matteo and Silvia's first one-to-one interviews concerning Sslmit teachers, analysing them through the lens of narrative positioning to examine how they position Sslmit teachers in relation to their previous experiences and invoke wider Discourses which appear across the data.

In his first one-to-one interview, I ask Matteo about his ‘experiences of Sslmit’ since coming to the institution from Rome. Matteo had already talked about his first degree in Rome earlier on in the interview and I ask him what is ‘good or bad’ about Sslmit in comparison. What follows is a narrative that compares his experiences in Rome to Sslmit, followed by two embedded narratives (see section 6.2 for a definition) concerning a friend in Rome and another at Sslmit (frequenting his second year in the institution).

- 1 Alan: ... (.) what were you're experiences of sslmit since you've been here?
2 at the school in general
3 Matteo: (.) well
4 Alan: go- good and bad perhaps
5 ((matteo laughs))
6 Matteo: well er::m (...) in rome er::m the:: the classes were overcrowded
7 (.) so er::m in my: even in Japanese class well (.) o:ne (.) we we can
8 think that Japanese is not a so a a language that is so: (.) that is
9 popular (.) but er::m in rome er: Japanese classes but even Chinese
10 classes Korean classes they were overcrowded you couldn't find a
11 seat a:nd sin- since there were a lot of students in the er: in the
12 rooms well you you don't have a direct contact with the
13 with the professors
14 Alan: hm m
15 Matteo: er:m so I think here here at the sslmit you: can be: er: (.) follow I
16 don't know if I can say I can use this (verb) but you can be
17 followed by the by the professors
18 Alan: hm m
19 Matteo: there's a: there's a contact and a and I think that the subjects are
20 more: er: well the- there's more practice
21 Alan: hm m
22 Matteo: er::m and tha- that's that's what er: (...) wh- what I i I find this
23 amazing here at the sslmit
24 Alan: h hm
25 Matteo: first of all then the quality of the: (.) er::: of s- of the: of the teaching

26 Alan: hm m

27 Matteo: in general [here

28 Alan: [hm

29 Matteo: because I think it's high quality

30 Alan: hm m

31 Matteo: it's completely different for example in in rome er well one of my

32 friends er::m studies

33 Matteo: er::m mediazione [culturale

34 Alan: [hm m

35 Matteo: in rome well th- the I I think that the name of the: bachelor degree

36 is the is the same but the level they they reach at the end of the of

37 their studies at the end of the of the years (.) er::m is completely

38 different well wha- the the level they reach at the end of their

39 studies is th- the level we need to get into the into the sslmit

40 Alan: hm m

41 Matteo: and well i: I have a friend here at the sslmit and he studies he's

42 er:m he's attending the second year courses em: well (.) he: he

43 told me about the sslmit and the courses and well i: i: could see

44 that the level was completely different

45 Alan: h hm

46 Matteo: and (.) that was that was amazing so I decided

(Matteo 1 interview. Recording times: 00:07:16 – 00:10:10. See appendix A: p.371, lines, 140 – 205)

8.2.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

Matteo introduces the scene of classes in Rome, which he describes as being 'overcrowded' (line 6). The students there are positioned as having to study in physically uncomfortable conditions, as not all of them could find seats (lines 10-11), and the 'professors' are positioned as being distant, having no 'direct contact' (line 12) with the students. Matteo then introduces Sslmit, where 'there's a contact' (line 19)

between professors and students, and where the former are able to ‘follow’ (line 15) the students’ progress more, giving more opportunities for the students to practice their ‘subjects’. This contrast between Rome and Sslmit is described by Matteo as being ‘amazing’ (line 23), positioning Sslmit as being a much more positive environment to study in than Rome, in part due to its smaller teacher-student ratio and greater ‘contact’ with teachers who are able to guide their progress more.

Matteo then goes on to position the teachers at Sslmit as providing a higher quality of teaching than the teachers at Rome. He introduces an embedded narrative of a ‘friend’ who is studying for a similar degree in Rome to Matteo’s at Sslmit (‘mediazione culturale’, Cultural mediation). His friend, and the friend’s fellow students (indexed by the plural pronoun ‘they’, line 36), are described as attaining a language level at the end of their bachelor degree which is only the starting level at Sslmit, positioning the institution as providing better language teaching.

Matteo then introduces another embedded narrative with another friend, who is already in his second year at Sslmit, positioning him as being an experienced informant on the institution. Although Matteo begins to introduce the friend’s reported speech about courses in the institution (‘he told me about the Sslmit and the courses’, lines 42-43), he stops before reporting the actual speech to introduce his own voice, positioning the friend as being unnecessary to the narrative as Matteo ‘could see the level (at Sslmit) was completely different’ himself (lines 43-44). This positions Matteo as a language student who knows how to judge language levels.

Matteo finishes his turn by describing the language level in Sslmit as being ‘amazing’ (line 46), using the same adjective that he used to describe the closer teacher-student relationship at Sslmit, and suggesting that this was why he ‘decided’ (line 46) to come to institution. The repeated use of the adjective ‘amazing’, appears to create a causal link between smaller classes, with more teacher-student ‘contact’, and the high level of language teaching in the institution; higher than other institutions, such as Matteo’s last university in Rome.

8.2.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

Matteo's narratives emerge from talk about his previous experiences in Rome and his new experiences at Sslmit.

In the interview, I position Matteo as an experienced student who already has experiences in another Italian university, which make him a valid informant on how the institution may differ from other higher education institutions. By eliciting 'good or bad' experiences (line 4), I position myself as a 'researcher' who is interested in obtaining an *objective* overview, and not as a *teacher* who might take criticism personally and expect only positive feedback. Affirmed in this positioning, Matteo proceeds to inform me about the negative aspects of studying in his previous institution (overcrowding, less contact with the teachers and less potential to practice their languages) and the 'amazing' difference in Sslmit (no overcrowding, more contact with the teachers, more potential to practice and develop languages, and a higher standard of teaching in general). Matteo's praise for the teachers at Sslmit positions me as a teacher who is equally worthy of that praise, and positions Matteo as a happy and content student in the institution.

8.2.3 Level 3 analysis: Connecting levels one and two to Discourses

Matteo's narratives highlight the difference in the teacher-to-student ratio between La Sapienza university in Rome and Sslmit. This is reflected in the statistics of tertiary education in Italy in general, where the average university teacher has 19.5 students per head, in comparison, for example, to the UK's 17.4 and the United States' 13.3 (statistics taken from a UNESCO survey)⁴³. This is a marked difference from statistics from Italian upper secondary education where trends appear to be reversed, with Italy having 10.9 students per teacher in comparison with the UK's 13, and the United States 15 (Ibid).

⁴³ 2008 statistics from UNESCO's survey of world education, as presented on their website, <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/default.aspx>

The higher teacher-to-student ratio in Italy's tertiary education might be explained in part by very low public investment in state university education, spending only 4.8% of its GDP in 2008 (1.3 percentage points below the OECD's average total of 6.1%) ranking it 29th out of 34 countries surveyed (OECD statistics in world education⁴⁴).

Matteo positions Sslmit as being different from other Italian state universities then, by having a much lower teacher-to-student ratio. This positioning is used, in part, to suggest the reason for higher standards of teaching at Sslmit in comparison to other language teaching institutions (i.e. La Sapienza where he studied). The relation between smaller teacher-student classroom ratios and better teaching and student language learning outcomes, invokes Discourses that lower teacher-student ratios improve student performance in language classes.

Research has suggested that smaller class sizes facilitate a stronger sense of unity and cohesion among students, aiding in creating a lighter, more playful classroom environment (Wang and Finn 2000), and specifically from the student's perspective on language learning, smaller classes have evidenced lower levels of student anxiety (Harfitt, 2012), where

- Students in smaller classes were more aware of support provided by classmates.
- Students in smaller classes sensed having more confidence in speaking up and participating in class.
- These same students were less anxious about receiving negative evaluation from peers.
- They also perceived a reduced loss of 'face' when compared with studying in a larger class.

(Ibid: 336)

⁴⁴ See <http://www.oecd.org/education/school/educationataglance2011oecdindicators.htm>

10 [competition
 11 Alan: [hm m
 12 Silvia: so much I mean (..) I I felt like I (wasn't) in the right place and now I
 13 feel like it so:
 14 Alan: hm m
 15 Silvia: (..) I did I don't bother about I don't know (.) I can't be bothered
 16 from I don't know by by I think ((small laugh))
 17 Alan: hm
 18 Silvia: what they (.) what they say: what how people react or (.) I don't
 19 know (.) hm: I just feel right here
 20 Alan: hm
 21 Silvia: so it's my my element I can I could say
 22 Alan: yes yes (.) so you don- in the the stu- the teachers (.) they don't put
 23 any pressure on you to: (..)
 24 Silvia: no: the teachers I don't think so
 25 Alan: h hm
 26 Silvia: (.) I I do like my teachers ((laughs)) erm: (...) because they are so:
 27 (.) natural I don't know
 28 Alan: h hm
 29 Silvia: they feel comfortable too when speaking to the to our to us students
 30 Alan: h hm
 31 Silvia: so: (.) I feel like we are a family (2.0) I I know it's ((laughs)) (.) a
 32 little bit insane but ((laughs through last phrase))

(Silvia 1 interview. Recording time: 00:08:30 – 00:10:12. See appendix A: p.398, lines, 222 -263)

8.3.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

Silvia's narrative is introduced in line 8, after I had asked her about the 'atmosphere' in the Sslmit classes. She sets the scene in the department of political sciences where she had studied previously (see section 3.3.1 for a biography) and positions herself as

not feeling ‘comfortable’ there (lines 8-9) as she felt that she ‘wasn’t in the right place’ (line 12), and was not interested in what the teachers had to say. She then changes scene to Sslmit in the present where she positions herself as being in the ‘right place’ now, and in her ‘element’ (line 21). The teachers in Sslmit are positioned as being liked by both her and all her fellow students (indexed by her use of the plural object pronoun ‘us’, when they speak to ‘us students’, line 29) because they are ‘so natural’ (lines 26-27), which suggests that they are relaxed and easy to talk to perhaps. Silvia then positions the teachers as feeling the same about the students as well, portraying them as feeling ‘comfortable when they are speaking to ...us’ (line 29), again suggesting a relaxed and informal relationship. Silvia concludes her turn by comparing both teachers and students to being like ‘a family’ (line 31).

8.3.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

The narrative emerges from talk about Silvia’s experiences in the classroom at Sslmit. Silvia positions herself as feeling ‘comfortable’ there, suggesting to me that she was meant to study in the institution. Affirmed in this positioning by my back channelling ‘yeah’ (line 7), she introduces her experience in the political sciences department as an example of a place where she did not feel comfortable. In this sustained turn, Silvia seems to be positioning me as potentially doubting her affirmation that Sslmit is where she belongs, and countering that by re-enforcing her positioning of herself as being in the right place now. Silvia uses her narrative to contrast her past and present selves. In the past (in political sciences) she ‘didn’t feel quite comfortable’ (lines 8-9), she ‘wasn’t in the right place’ (line 12), and the teachers didn’t say anything interesting (emphasised by her repetition of her not being ‘bothered’ about what they said, line 15). Silvia’s final stretch of dialogue appears to further reinforce her positioning of herself as belonging in Sslmit, repeating her affirmation (with heightened stress) that ‘I just feel right here’ (line 19), and describing herself as being in her ‘element’ (line 21).

I challenge her positioning of herself as feeling comfortable and in the right place by suggesting that the teachers at Sslmit ‘put pressure’ on her (lines 22-23) and that

potentially therefore she might not be on good terms with them. Silvia however, refuses to ratify this by giving an immediate denial ('no the teachers I don't think so', line 24) and an affirmation that she likes the teachers because they are 'natural' (line 27), positioning them as being relaxed and easy to get on with (as previously suggested). Silvia then positions the students and teachers as being like 'a family' (line 31). This positions me as a teacher (being part of the teaching staff) and consequently a member of the 'family' she is describing, potentially undermining a strict teacher-student asymmetrical power relationship. As a reaction to her own affirmation then Silvia subsequently comments 'I know it's a little insane' (lines 31-32), positioning me as perhaps not agreeing with her, or finding her comment as being threatening to me as a professional teacher in the institution.

8.3.3 Level 3 analysis: Connecting levels one and two to Discourses

Although Silvia does not talk about the didactic advantages of a smaller teacher-student ratio, as Matteo does, she does appear to emphasise a greater feeling of intimacy between the teachers and students in Sslmit (in contrast to her previous department), a spirit of community which is positioned as being similar to perhaps the most intimate of communities, the family. In relation to the Discourse that smaller classes can foster a close community environment, with the teacher being considered less of an outsider in such communities (Wang and Finn, 2000; Harfitt, 2012), Silvia's choice of metaphor (the family) appears to position the teacher as a parental figure, part of an intimate, hierarchical structure, where the students are consequently positioned as children. Silvia's narrative might be interpreted as her attempt to firmly position herself as a valid member of the 'family' of Sslmit, a place where she is 'comfortable' and on intimate terms with her teachers (positioning herself it seems as a daughter to her parents), respectful of the power difference but also perhaps expectant of care and concern for her development (see section 8.8, where the parental image of the teacher re-emerges in other narratives).

The intimate teacher-student community that Silvia's narrative portrays in Sslmit is also present in other narratives that emerge in subsequent one-to-one interviews in the

second session of interviews. I now turn to look at these, and then go on to look at the final group interview where all the participants narrate their perceptions of the effect of this teacher-student community on their lives in the institution.

8.4 Teachers are not ‘classical university professors’: Federico’s narrative

In his second one-to-one interview, I ask Federico about relations between students and teachers, and whether he has noticed any ‘changes or trends’ over the year. Federico begins by talking about missing lessons more in the second term, and not feeling obliged to frequent all his classes as he did in the first term. The following talk emerges from this.

- 1 Fed: ...also regarding to the teachers you: professors I should say (.) well (.)
2 ((laughs)) ah the relation between (...) the students and the professors
3 it's not exactly a professor student relationship ((laughing tone))
4 Alan: no? why?
5 Fed: well mainly because it's not (.) 10 (.) metres away and it's just (.) here
6 (.) it's more personal it's (.) it's not a classical university professor in
7 italy at least (.)
8 Alan: hm
9 Fed: (..) generally it's 200 people classes so it's not (..) personal
10 Alan: hm m
11 Fed: a:nd (2.0)
12 Alan: is that good? do do do you like this aspect of it?
13 Fed: em yes I guess so yes it's erm (.) yes with the funny ones yes ((small
14 laugh)) (.) but still with the one you don't really care for you (.) don't
15 really have to (.) talk to them ((laughs))
16 Alan: hm m
17 Fed: yeah you do the class (and your like) the: the one you you (...) you like
18 more (.) you talk to them and it's not (xx) becomes more of a erm (...)
19 knowing kinda thing rather than being in the same room and you teach
20 to me and I learn (.)

21 Alan: hm m

22 Fed: so yes it's good because (.) you get to meet the person and it's good (.)

23 I guess it's (.) it's a good thing ((laughs))

(Federico 2 interview. Recording time: 00:12:31 - 00:14:03. See appendix A: p.475, Lines 247 – 280)

Federico, like Matteo and Silvia, had also been in another Italian university (studying medicine) before coming to Sslmit (see section 3.3.1 for a biography), and he appears to draw on this experience to compare the two in his narrative. I now go on to analyse this using narrative positioning.

8.4.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

Federico's introduction to his narrative positions the teachers and the students in Sslmit as not having a *standard* teacher-student relationship, 'it's not exactly a professor student relationship' (line 3), indexing the teacher as a 'professor' and therefore part of the field of higher education, and positioning himself as someone who knows what that relationship should be. Federico then introduces the scene of the Sslmit classroom which is described as being more 'personal' than 'a classical university professor in Italy' would expect (lines 6-7); where 'classical' appears to index what Federico perceives as being the *average* or *standard* classroom in Italian higher education institutions. The 'classical' Italian classroom is portrayed as having an elevated student-teacher ratio ('200 people per class, line 9) and a greater spatial distance between teacher and students (over '10 metres', line 5). The closer physical proximity of the professor to a smaller group of students in the Sslmit classroom is described as being 'more personal' (line 6), suggesting that this is more than just a numerical and spatial variation, but one of personal relationships.

When I ask Federico if the different teacher-student relationship in Sslmit is 'good' (line 12), Federico divides the teachers into two types of character, those who are amusing, 'the funny ones' (line 13), and those who are not. Federico positions himself

and his fellow students (indexed by his use of the impersonal ‘you’ pronoun, line 14) as preferring the former, whom they get to know, and the latter as those they do not really ‘care for’ (line 14) and don’t talk to. Federico appears to be focusing on the level of amusement or entertainment that the teacher generates in the classroom in relation to liking a teacher or not. He also describes his fellow students and himself as not attending the classes of those teachers they do not like (‘you do the class the oneyou like more’, lines 17-18) which positions the value of an entertaining or amusing lesson above its didactic value.

Moreover, Federico describes the teacher-student relationship as not being one of ‘you teach me and I learn’ (lines 19-20) but rather of a ‘knowing kinda thing’ (line 19), where personal relationships are highlighted as being more relevant than pedagogical ones. Federico concludes his turn by seeing this ability to ‘meet the person’ (line 22), (presumably to get to know the teacher) as a good thing, albeit tentatively so (noted by the use of ‘I guess’, line 23).

8.4.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

The narrative emerges from talk about Federico’s experiences with the teachers at Sslmit. I invite him to act as an informant, and Federico takes up that role, positioning himself and myself as having a shared understanding of what the teacher-student roles should be and how Sslmit is different. Federico’s initial comment regarding the ‘teachers’ is reformulated as the ‘professors I should say’ (line 1), positioning me as an institutional figure in a university context. This might also be a way of contextualising the relationship at a university level and showing me that Federico is aware of the difference. I, however, refuse to ratify Federico’s positioning of me as knowing that Sslmit is different from other institutions, by voicing uncertainty (‘no? why?’, line 4) and asking him to explain why he thinks so. Federico subsequently positions himself as an informant on the ‘classical’ Italian university system, and myself as being unknowledgeable about this and in need of the relevant information he can supply.

After highlighting the elevated numerical ratio of teacher to students in Italian universities, and the greater spatial separation between the two (described as being a less ‘personal’ relationship between the two), I position myself as a *foreign* teacher who is unaware of this cultural difference, and question whether or not it is desirable to have closer teacher-student contact. Although my positioning of myself might be taken as making a teacher’s pedagogical inquiry (i.e. does it facilitate learning?), Federico chooses to interpret it as one of ‘personal’ relationships between teachers and students. He positions me therefore as someone who is interested in the emotive aspect of teacher-student relationships in Sslmit, where students are positioned by him as choosing to frequent classes based more on whether they like the teachers as people, rather than on whether they are good teachers or not. In lines 18-20, Federico appears to clarify his reasons for talking about these personal relationships by positioning me as being potentially unaware about the student perspective of classroom life in Sslmit, where didactic reasons for attending are secondary to personal (‘it’s a knowing kinda thing rather than .. you teach me and I learn’, lines 19-20). In his final turn, Federico reinforces his positioning of himself as a student informant and his choice of interpretation of my question as being about personal relationships, repeating his evaluation of Sslmit as being good ‘because you get to meet the person and it’s good’ (line 22).

8.4.3 Level 3 analysis: Connecting levels one and two to Discourses

Federico appears to invoke Discourses concerning smaller class sizes facilitating a lighter, more playful classroom environment (Wang and Finn 2000), where some teachers are ‘funny’ (the ones they want to get to know), and others are presumably not (the ones they do not care for), and how teachers are perceived by the students as being inside or outside their community accordingly (Harfitt, 2012). Federico’s focus however is not on the didactic advantages of lower teacher to student ratios (unlike Matteo in his narrative, see section 8.2) but rather on the ‘personal’ relationships that form between teachers and their students, which he positions as being more important than the actual learning processes in the classroom. In his words the Sslmit classroom is not a place where ‘you teach me and I learn’ (lines 19-20), it is a place of personal

relationships between the students and their teacher, a place where you ‘do the class...you like more’ (lines 17-18), which is not about the lesson but about the teacher’s character. In sum, Federico’s positioning of Sslmit as being different from other Italian institutions, where the teacher is not like ‘a classical university professor’ (line 6) highlights the relationship between teachers and the students as being more personal, playing a larger role in their lives than the didactic processes going on in the classroom.

Furthermore, Federico’s implicit assumption that *normal* teacher-student relationships (which do not exist in Sslmit) are about channelling information (‘you teach me and I learn’), also invokes a further Discourse which portrays teachers as ‘conduits’ of information, foregrounding cognitive processes and backgrounding social processes in teacher-student interaction. This Discourse, in relation to language learning, takes a decontextualized and reified view of the learner, depicting him/her as a passive container of information, where language is seen as being an objective body of knowledge which is ‘transmitted’ from teacher to student (Kramsch: 2009). The counter Discourse to this sees the student as a ‘social learner’ and not just a recipient of pedagogy, evolving out of a particular socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-educational environment and learning in a situated context (Norton: 1995, 2000, 2006; Pavlenko & Blackledge: 2004; Pavlenko: 2006; Kramsch: 2009).

Federico’s narrative then exhibits a tension between these two Discourses. On one side he appears to accept the Discourse that normal teacher-student relations are about transmitting knowledge, but in the context of Sslmit this does not appear to apply as the social atmosphere of the class is foremost, and central to this is the personal relationship that the teacher has with the students.

8.5 Changes in perceptions of teacher-student relationships in the second term: Matteo’s narrative

Whereas in his first interview one-to-one Matteo is positive about his relationship with teachers (see section 8.2), in his second one-to-one interview he raises a complaint

about them, regarding whether students can or cannot refuse a mark and retake their exams. Matteo takes issue with the different language departments and their contradictory positions on the matter (in particular the German and English departments). The following is a transcript of the dialogue that introduces his narrative,

- 1 Matteo: yes yes yes erm (..) just erm another thing that i: i've found erm during the
2 our classes was the: (.) well the arguments around the possibility to refuse the the
3 mark you get at at the exam
- 4 Alan: hm m
- 5 Matteo: and I have found two: different reactions between the English professors
6 and the german professors er: i i just don't know the law or (these) sort of
7 things but er:m even in the university of rome la sapienza (.) i: could er:
8 refuse the the score i: i got in an exam and and repeat that exam or the: (.)
9 whe-whensoever I wanted
- 10 Alan: hm m
- 11 Matteo: bu: (..) and the german class the the german professor said yes you can do
12 it you can do it even here even here at the Ssmit but the professor but but
13 the english professors said no (..) we: asked why (...) but (.) there (.) there
14 wasn't a clear response (.) they just said no (we) that's the way: we do
15 things here (.) er: it's not possible (..)
- 16 Alan: the way we the English do it [here? (or the way we:)]
- 17 Matteo: [the: erm
18 it was not clear
- 19 Alan: ah
- 20 Matteo: it was not clear (.) and well (.) the students were (.) quite sca:red cos you
21 know (.) the: the class is not so big (.)
- 22 Alan: hm
- 23 Matteo: and so the the professors know all the students (.) so they were quite
24 scared (.) I was quite scared and so i: i said ok it's ok (.)
- 25 Alan: so when you say you were scared you were scared to (.) raise your voice?
- 26 Matteo: yes (..) [yes
27 Alan: [bu- but

28 you weren't happy
 29 Matteo: err (..) yes I wasn't happy because i: I think I know (.) how:: (..) how are
 30 things in the university in general we: we have this right (.) the students
 31 have the right to refuse the the score they get at the exam (.)
 32 Alan: hm m
 33 Matteo: and they can I I think and i: (.) yes I know that they can refuse it er
 34 whenever they want

(Matteo 2 interview. Recording time: 00:08:10 – 00:10:49. See appendix A: p.542, lines 112 - 165)

8.5.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

Matteo introduces himself as two characters in two different scenes in this narrative, his former self, studying at the University of Rome, and his institutional self in Sslmit (present in the classes of his German and English teachers). The narrative is introduced as being about 'the arguments around the possibility to refuse the mark you get at the exam' (lines 2-3), (where 'arguments' is potentially a false friend, as 'argomenti' in Italian means 'on the subject of'). Matteo positions the English and German teachers as giving two different 'reactions' (line 5) to the possibility of refusing marks. Matteo positions himself as being ignorant about 'the law or these sort of things' (lines 6-7), perhaps meaning the institutional rules at Sslmit, but he introduces his former self, at the university of La Sapienza in Rome, where he 'could refuse the score (he) got in an exam and repeat that exam whenever (he) wanted' (lines 7-9). This contrast introduces a tension between the two university departments and their approaches to exam retakes.

Matteo returns to the scene at Sslmit where he reports one German professor as telling him that he can do the same as in Rome, but English professors as telling him that he cannot. This shifts the tension from the two universities he has previously introduced to an internal tension between departments in Sslmit itself. Matteo reports himself and the other students asking the English professors the reason for this, indexed by his use

of the plural pronoun 'we' in 'we asked why' (line 13), where heightened stress on 'why' positions the students as being confused but also potentially frustrated. Matteo then positions the professors as being elusive and unwilling to give reasoned arguments by his reported speech of their answer '... that's the way we do things here' (lines 14-15). Matteo comments on this as not being 'a clear response' (line 14), and positions himself as being clearly frustrated by the English professors. His repetition of the phrase 'it was not clear' in his following turn (lines 18 and 20) reinforces his frustration at the English professors' evasive response, positioning himself as a student who expects clear responses on matters of institutional rules and regulations. Matteo then goes on to position the students in the English professors' classroom, as being 'scared' (line 20) to argue with their teachers on the subject because the class is 'not so big' (line 21) and 'the professors know all the students' (line 23). This positions the professors' close proximity and knowledge about class individuals as being a potential threat to the students, and consequently positions the professors as being capable of threatening behaviour (although this is not explicitly stated). Matteo reinforces his description of the students as being scared due to these circumstances and finishes the turn with a statement of his own personal feeling of being scared which led him to accept what the teachers said without complaint, 'I was quite scared and so I said ok ' (line 24).

In his final turn, Matteo shifts from the narrative event to position himself in the narrative-telling event (in the interview situation) as a reliable informant on how other Italian universities work *in general*, and therefore on his fellow students' rights within such institutions. The possibility to refuse marks is described by Matteo as a student 'right' which he repeats twice ('we have this right (.) the students have the right..', lines 30-31) re-enforcing his apparent frustration but also suggesting that the English teachers are unjust, denying students' rights within the institution which might affect their final degree marks. After an initial hesitation he concludes his turn with a statement to reinforce that right, 'I think (.) I know that they can refuse it er whenever they want' (lines 33-34), thereby positioning himself again as a reliable informant on university rules and regulations.

8.5.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

The narrative emerges from talk about English and German classes in interpreting, where Matteo expresses a greater appreciation for how the German teachers planned and organised their lessons. In the interview, I suggest that the English teachers were less organised than the Germans, and Matteo agrees, going on to initiate the narrative directly after this.

Matteo's narrative initially positions me as a teacher in the English department, by requesting ratification that the teachers there are not as organised perhaps and clear on the institution's rules and regulations. I ratify his positioning of myself as a member of the English department, by using the plural subject pronoun 'we' in relation to 'the English' when I say 'the way we ... English do it here?' (line 16). By doing this, I also position myself as being potentially part of Matteo's problem with English teachers, a potentially disorganised and uninformed English teacher as well. Matteo however does not ratify my positioning of myself as actually being part of the problem. He does this by continuing his narrative in relation to those English teachers present at the time and what they had said, focusing therefore on the past, and removing it contextually from the present and my presence. Matteo's continuation of the narrative further positions me as ratifying his frustration with the *other* English teachers, as well as my awareness of how students could be 'scared' in the classroom when teachers are in close proximity and on familiar terms with each individual student. I ratify this by clarifying my understanding of what Matteo means by scared (scared to raise his voice in class), and positioning Matteo as being unhappy with not challenging the English teachers, which Matteo immediately affirms as the correct interpretation. In Matteo's final two turns (lines 29-34) he returns to the narrative-telling event, concluding the narrative, in order to position himself as an informant on student rights with regard to the 'right' in Italian universities to retake exams, which the English professors are positioned as not respecting. Matteo positions me as potentially not ratifying this right as shown by his insistence that he 'knows' it to be true (repeating the verb two times, lines 29 and 33), this also positions me as an English teacher again and potentially just as uninformed as my colleagues appear to be.

8.5.3 Level 3 analysis: Connecting levels one and two to Discourses

Matteo's positioning of the Sslmit teachers as being positive characters in his first one-to-one interview (section 8.2), in relation to didactic outcomes due to a smaller teacher-student ratio at Sslmit, is absent in his second one-to-one narrative. The Discourses that he appears to invoke in his first interview, which focus on smaller classes as potential sources of higher levels of teaching and learning, are backgrounded. Instead, Matteo appears to invoke a counter-Discourse to the one that Silvia draws on in her first one-to-one interview (section 8.3), where the teacher-student relationship is portrayed as a tight community ('a family') and the teacher as an insider in that community, rather than an outside figure of authority (Harfitt, 2012). Matteo's narrative positions the English teachers as outsiders rather, characters that impose their own unfair rules on the community of students, denying them their rights within the institution. The smaller teacher-student ratio of the Sslmit classes positions the teachers as being more capable of doing this precisely because the community is small, positioning the students as fearful of retaliation by the teachers because they cannot hide behind elevated numbers of students and the relative anonymity of more standard Italian institutions, such as La Sapienza in Rome (Matteo's former institution).

The second group interview, at end of the participants' first academic year in the institution, shows an increased breakdown in the 'community' of teachers and students⁴⁵. I now go on to look at the narratives that emerged in that interview.

8.6 The teacher-student 'community' in the second term: Group narratives

Interviews carried out in the second session of the research revealed tensions in teacher-student relations in the institution. In the following sections of this chapter (sections 8.6 - 8.7) I examine examples of this in comparison to more positive

⁴⁵ See also my field notes (appendix B, p. 742 and p. 744) for relevant observations in the field (observing Federico and Silvia, and a conversation with Matteo).

portrayals of teacher-student relations in the first session, focusing in particular on the participants' shared narratives of their experiences.

Towards the beginning of the second group interview the participants are discussing the results of their end of term exams and the possibility of their refusing their marks. I invite Matteo to recount to the group a story he told me in his second one-to-one interview, concerning his flatmate's experiences in the second year. The following is a transcript of the subsequent talk.

- 1 Matteo: [ah: no last year
2 the: this this matter came up at the exam (.) so I know this erm because er
3 my flat mate was is erm a second year student (.)
4 Alan: hm m
5 Matteo: and he told me that last year they didn't know anything (.)
6 and at the exam the: professor said er: well (.) you cannot
7 refuse the er the mark
8 Alan: hm m
9 Matteo: you: just we will do the exam in with several groups and then we: we will
10 say er: there are no scores under 24 for example (..) er and that's it
11 Alan: right ok so so that was last year=
12 Fed: =cos also this year we asked
13 Silvia: [yeah
14 Fed: [because he [(xxxxxxxxxx)
15 Maria: [yeah we asked
16 ((Federico talks in background))
17 cos we knew that somebody
18 Fed: and then we asked a professor because otherwise they
19 wouldn't have told us anything
20 ((silvia talks in background))
21 Alan: what did they say?
22 Fed: oh they said oh yes it was so last year I don't know this
23 year because the co-ordinator changed and this year it was
24 professor (cara) I think

25 Alan: hm m

26 Fed: and last year it was someone else (.) and they didn't know

27 if this year there would have been the same kinda of (.) er rules

28 Alan: hm m (.) ok so it was confusing

29 Fed: but then

30 Silvia: yeah

31 Fed: they told us that there was [(xx)

32 Silvia: [ok (.) we got it

33 Matteo: yeah but the Sslmit is confused

34 Silvia: yeah

35 ((federico sniggers))

36 Matteo: I am quite disappointed ((general low laughter))

37 Alan: why why why are you disappointed?

38 Matteo: because for example even at the er mediation exam (.)

39 erm i: had to do the exam for less credits

40 Alan: hm m

41 Matteo: i: wrote (.) more than 10 e-mails (.) to all the professors

42 (.) of the erm mediation class (.) and when I did it the exam (.)

43 they said (.) what do you have to do? Who are you? less

44 credits why? (...)

45 Alan: right so you got no response

46 Matteo: m: here at the Sslmit they don't have classrooms with

47 (.) 500 students (.) ((Federico laughs))

48 Alan: hm m

49 Matteo: like in the sapienza university (.) they have (.) 24 students

50 60 students (.) ah (.) and I find i: i find it quite disappointing erm (2.0)

51 Alan: ok=

52 Fed: =I noticed that our professor feel like erm don't feel the

53 (.) ea:se of working here I mean it's surely mainly because it's

54 a very good school but they don't understand they have 30

55 students top (.) and it's

56 Alan: what do you mean they don't understand?

57 Fed: they don't they they: they keep the same for example

58 timetables that they would for example to correct an
 59 exam as if they had 500 students or they used the erm:
 60 they act as if they had the (burocracy) bureaucracy
 61 weight of (.) that much students as (..) well they really don't
 62 Alan: hm m
 63 Fed: and it's not like I'm asking for a: an apple on the table
 64 every morning when I come into the classroom but (.)
 65 ((silvia sniggers))

(Group 2 interview. Recording time: 00:08:45 – 00:12:33. See appendix A: p.674,
 lines 289 - 385)

This stretch of dialogue presents four interrelated narratives on the subject of teachers. The first is told by Matteo (lines 1-10), the second by Federico (12-21), and then the third and fourth again by Matteo (lines 41-50) and Federico (lines 52-65) respectively. I examine each narrative using level one and two analysis before moving to a broader level three analysis (see section 8.7), drawing on potential wider Discourses affecting these narratives.

8.6.1 Level 1 analysis – Matteo's first narrative

In Matteo's first narrative he introduces his 'flatmate' in the second year at Sslmit (line 3), whom he describes as going to do an exam and being told by a teacher (unnamed) that he could not retake the exam if he received a mark above 24 (Matteo does not state this clearly but the previous talk was concerned with cut off grades below which students should or should not refuse their marks, contextualising '24' as the teacher's decision). Matteo's reported speech positions all the students in the narrative as a collective character that 'didn't know anything' (line 5) until the exam, positioning them as being surprised and unprepared for what occurred. The teacher's announcement is reported as a series of imperative statements: 'you cannot refuse the mark' (lines 6-7), 'we will just do the exam' (line 9), 'we will say there are no scores under 24 for example' (lines 9-10). This positions the teacher (and his colleagues,

indexed by the plural subject pronoun ‘we’), as being unconcerned by any protests the students may have and excluding them from any debate on the matter. The final phrase ‘for example’ (line 10) further positions the teacher as being uncertain about the actual ‘rule’ he is introducing in that moment, as the suggestion is that it may change (serving only as *an example* of a possible cut off mark).

8.6.2 Level 2 analysis – Matteo’s first narrative

The narrative emerges from general talk about the marks students should or should not refuse, and Maria’s statement that she intends to refuse her mark in Russian. I introduce Matteo’s earlier narrative (in his second one-to-one interview) where he refers to his flatmate’s story for the first time, about being told that he couldn’t refuse his mark just before the exam began, inviting Matteo to share it with the group. Matteo’s narrative emerges from this context then.

Matteo introduces his flat mate’s narrative to position the teachers as being unfair and authoritarian in their approach to the students and, by extension, the participants present in the interview. Matteo positions the group therefore as being potentially under the same threat as his flat mate in the narrative, subject to the unfair dictates of teachers and being unable to trust them with regard to the arbitrary rules they appear to make up at the last minute, which may even affect their academic careers. In doing this Matteo also positions me as an institutional character who will ratify the unfairness of what he is describing, and potentially the injustices that students have to suffer in the institution.

When I note that Matteo’s narrative refers to events that occurred ‘last year’, suggesting that things might no longer be the same, Federico introduces his narrative.

8.6.3 Level 1 analysis – Federico's first narrative

Federico sets the scene as 'this year' (line 12), introducing the participants as characters in the narrative event asking a teacher for information about this year's rules. Like Matteo before, Federico uses this narrative to position the teachers as being reluctant to communicate with the students, commenting that if the participants had not asked '....they wouldn't have told us anything' (lines 18-19). Federico's reported speech of the teacher's reply positions the teacher as being unsure of the rules and regulations, as well as the internal organisation of the degree course.

22 Fed: oh they said oh yes it was so last year I don't know this
23 year because the co-ordinator changed and this year it was
24 professor (cara) I think

The professor is reported as not knowing the situation this year ('I don't know this year', lines 22-23), as well as being uncertain of who is co-ordinating the degree course this year ('this year it was professor (cara) I think', lines 23-24) and even the year before ('it was someone else', line 26). Federico's further reported speech positions the teachers as being ignorant of the faculty's rules and regulations on retaking exams this year

26 they didn't know
27 if this year there would have been the same kinda of (.) er rules

In Federico's narrative then he ratifies and develops Matteo's positioning of the teachers, suggesting that they cannot be trusted by the group as they either do not want to communicate with them, or are ignorant themselves of the rules and regulations they should know.

8.6.4 Level 2 analysis – Federico’s first narrative

Federico’s narrative emerges as a response to my suggestion that the circumstances that Matteo has described may no longer be relevant to the group. This challenge is refuted by Federico’s narrative, which ratifies Matteo’s positioning of the teachers, setting it in the context of ‘this year’.

Federico positions the group as ratifying that things have not changed, as well as refuting my suggestion that they may have. I position myself as agreeing with Federico and the group by aligning myself with Federico’s implicit assumption that things were ‘confusing’ (line 28) for the students this year as well. Affirmed by this, Federico then attempts to continue with his narrative, but is cut short by Silvia, ‘ok (.) we got it’ (line 32). Silvia therefore positions Federico as having said everything that needed to be said on the matter to the group.

Matteo returns in the next turn, picking up on my comment that things were confusing by describing Sslmit in general as being ‘confused’ (line 33). When I ask him why, he introduces another narrative.

8.6.5 Level 1 analysis – Matteo’s second narrative

Matteo sets the scene as writing e-mails to the teachers to explain how he did not require the full credits for the mediation exam (this relates to the group’s shared knowledge that this is Matteo’s second degree, which emerged in the first group interview, and that subsequently some credits would be allotted to him from his first degree in Rome).

Matteo highlights the elevated number of e-mails sent, ‘10’ (line 41), positioning himself as someone who was diligent and did all he could on his part to inform all the relevant teachers of his situation. His reported speech of the professors’ response on the day of the exam positions them as having ignored all his efforts to communicate with them (not even being aware of who he is) and/or of being disorganised

- 43 what do you have to do? Who are you? Less
44 credits why? (...)

Matteo then goes on to compare Sslmit to his previous university, emphasising the numerical difference of the teacher-to-student ratio

- 46 Matteo: m: here at the SSLMIT they don't have classrooms with
47 (.) 500 students (.) ((Federico laughs))
48 Alan: hm m
49 Matteo: like in the sapienza university (.) they have (.) 24 students
50 60 students (.) ah (.) and I find i: i find it quite disappointing erm (2.0)

The elevated classroom numbers of students that Matteo describes in his previous institution ('500', line 47) and the much reduced numbers at Sslmit (24 – 60 students, lines 49-50) positions the teachers as not giving enough help and support to students when they are potentially in a better position to do so, and positions himself and the group as being 'disappointed' with them consequently.

8.6.6 Level 2 analysis – Matteo's second narrative

Matteo's narrative emerges from talk about the institution's representatives (the teachers) as confusing students with regards to exam rules. Matteo picks up on how the teachers in Federico's narrative were positioned as being responsible for this, but he develops this by positioning the entire institution as being confused ('Sslmit is confused', line 33) and himself as being 'disappointed' with it (line 36). Matteo's narrative emerges from this then.

My question to Matteo, 'why are you disappointed?' (line 37), challenges his positioning of the institution as being 'confused' and invites him to defend his affirmation to me and the group. The narrative that emerges serves to position Matteo as being very 'reasonable' (writing emails to all the 'professors') and the teachers as

‘unreasonable’ and disorganised (evidently not having read his emails or having forgotten them), ratifying his initial claim that Sslmit is disorganised, and explaining his disappointment.

Matteo’s narrative serves to ratify his claim that the institution itself is confused, introducing ‘other’ teachers (other institutional representatives, presented in his second narrative) in another context (his personal correspondence to them), albeit exam related again. His narrative therefore, appears to expand on Federico’s in an attempt to show other instances of confusion and disorganisation within the institution and to have this ratified by both myself and the group.

I ratify Matteo’s positioning of the teachers in my reaction to the narrative, ‘right so you got no response’ (line 45), eliciting further comment. Matteo’s subsequent talk about his previous institution (La Sapienza university in Rome) serves to highlight his initial statement that Sslmit, as an institution, ‘is confused’. By contextualising his narrative in terms of teacher-to-student ratios between the two, Matteo makes the claim for both himself and the group that Sslmit should be better organised, as there are less students to organise.

Federico picks up on Matteo’s comparison between Sslmit and other institutions, and the suggestion that the teachers have an easier job in his second narrative.

8.6.7 Level 1 analysis – Federico’s second narrative

Federico introduces another narrative, which positions the teachers as not understanding the ‘ease of working’ (line 53) in Sslmit in comparison to other institutions. His comment that this is ‘surely mainly because it’s a very good school’ (lines 53-54), positions Sslmit as being an institution which exerts more working demands on its teaching staff than other university departments, and the teachers as having less time for students. However, Federico’s subsequent comment ‘but they don’t understand they have 30 students top’ (lines 54-55), positions the teachers as

being unaware of the extra work they should do in the context of a lower student body, but also potentially positions them as exaggerating their workloads as well.

In response to my request for clarification, Federico describes the teachers' as marking each exam as though they had 500 to do, and prone 'to act' (line 60) as though they had the bureaucratic weight of that elevated number to deal with (significantly, choosing the verb 'act' which can suggest a non-reflection of *reality*). This positions the teachers further as not only being disorganised but also as being potentially reticent to working harder for the students, as Federico's final comment seems to suggest

63 Fed: and it's not like I'm asking for a: an apple on the table
64 every morning when I come into the classroom but (.)

8.6.8 Level 2 analysis – Federico's second narrative

Federico's narrative emerges from Matteo's talk about the smaller teacher-to-student ratio at Sslmit, in contrast with 'La Sapienza' university, and his suggestion that teachers should have more time to consider student needs.

Federico positions the group as expecting teachers to understand that their working environment is much easier than other Italian university departments, and that they exaggerate their workload as though 'they had 500 students' when 'they only have 30 students top'.

Like Matteo, Federico's narrative positions the teachers as not fulfilling the basic requisites to satisfy him and the other students, positioning himself and the other participants as not expecting much, but something more than they actually receive from their teachers.

8.7 Level 3 analysis – Analysing the four narratives in relation to Discourses

Both Matteo and Federico's first narratives (sections 8.6.1 - 8.6.2 and 8.6.3 - 8.6.4, respectively) invoke a counter-discourse (also present in Matteo's narrative in his second one-to-one interview, see section 8.5.3) challenging the Discourse that smaller classroom sizes and teacher-to-student ratios increase a spirit of community, where teachers are positioned more as insiders rather than authoritative outsiders (see section 8.2.3).

Matteo's initial focus on the English teachers as being disorganised and reticent to communicate with students on the institutions rules and regulations, is developed into a general critique of the institution itself, indexed by Matteo's comment in his second narrative (section 8.6.5), that 'Sslmit is confused'. This positioning of the institution as being 'confused' suggests a general disorganisation at a top-down level, where teachers are not positioned as being directly responsible for it, but potentially contributing to it by being more independently positioned by the institution to make up their own rules as they go along, without institutional checks and controls to prevent them. The counter-discourse then appears to be that when institutions allow teachers to make up their own rules, or do not enforce existing rules, and students perceive these 'rules' to be arbitrary and unfair, smaller classes can be seen as oppressive places as students feel unable to criticise and protest.

Matteo and Federico's second narratives (sections 8.6.5 – 8.6.6 and 8.6.7 – 8.6.8, respectively) also add to this counter discourse, in that they see the smaller teacher-student ratio as meriting a greater degree of care and attention by the teachers, which is described by both as lacking (Matteo's e-mails appear to go unread and Federico's exam results are delayed as though teachers had hundreds to mark).

In these narratives then the very reason why Sslmit was initially seen as being special, it's smaller classes and more personalised contact with teachers, has become the source of its criticism.

Another theme that emerged through the data on teacher-student relationships was

one of maturity in relation to interpreter-student studies, where participants compared and contrasted Sslmit to their ‘high school’ experiences. In this context teacher-student relationships were critiqued as examples of what was perceived as excessive control in the classroom and a lack of autonomy in individual students’ ability to set their own goals and to be respected as mature students. In the following section of this chapter (section 8.8), I briefly turn to look at those narratives which expressed this tension in the institution and how it emerged in the participants’ talk.

8.8 Issues of maturity – A ‘high school’ or a university

In the second group interview I ask the participants to talk about the institution in relation to their ‘high school’ experiences, a subject they had introduced in some of their initial one-to-one interviews. Matteo is the first to respond

1 Matteo: I think the Sslmit is organised like an high school

2 Fed: yea::[:h

3 Rosa: [yeah

4 Silvia: yeah

5 Maria: [(it is)

6 Matteo: [yes

7 Maria: because we’re not that many I think

8 Fed: hm m

9 Silvia: I think it’s [worse

10 Maria: [(..) but it’s also

11 because since we are not that many we know each other more than

12 what normally happens a university I think (.) and so it was possible

13 to organise the (.) trash party (.) ((silvia sniggers)) I don’t think any

14 other university in the world is doing it apart from the American

15 college (..)

(Group 2 interview. Recording time: 00:21:57 – 00:22:29. See appendix A: p.685, lines 658-679)

Matteo sets the scene as being in Sslmit, where the institution is described as being organised in a similar way to a ‘high school’, which all the other participants ratify as true (lines 2-5). Maria then appears to explain this similarity as being due to the numerical similarities with high schools, ‘because we’re not that many I think’ (line 7), presumably referring to class numbers and/or potentially an overall low student-teacher ratio. Silvia’s comment that Sslmit is ‘worse’ than a high school (line 9), positions Matteo’s initial comment and the groups’ affirmation of it as a criticism of the institution, as in order to be ‘worse’ the concept of a high school must be *bad*. Maria however chooses to ignore this positioning by introducing a narrative about a ‘trash party’ (line 13) the students organised, portraying it as an example of how similar high school student numbers allows students to get to know each other more than in other Italian institutions, and facilitate the organisation of positive events such as a college party.

After a long exchange among the participants about the ‘trash party’ (concerned principally with describing how they dressed up for it) I ask them if being like a high school is good. Although Maria responds that she is ‘really happy we’re organised like a high school’ (maintaining a positive position), when I reiterate the question to the whole group, Maria returns in the subsequent turn to introduce a negative aspect

- 1 Maria: [for some things
- 2 it is for others you just want to get out of high school ((Silvia sniggers))
- 3 and be a grown up (..) woman

(Group 2 interview, Maria. Recording time: 00:24:49 – 00:24:56. See appendix A: p.689, lines 778-782)

Maria’s comment positions Sslmit (presumably meaning the teachers principally) as treating the participants as adolescents and positions the group as wanting to be treated more as ‘grown ups’ (line 3).

When I subsequently ask the group specifically about negative aspects of being like a high school Silvia is the first to respond, interrupted by Maria

- 1 Silvia: teachers know [you
2 Maria: [teachers
3 knows know you and (...) that's main thing and that (2.0)
4 it's a high school and you still feel like you're being
5 checked every single day (.) and you're not a grown up woman yet

(Group 2 interview. Recording time: 00:25:11 – 00:25:30. See appendix A: p.689, lines 797-804)

Silvia's response that 'teachers know you' (line 1), introduced as a negative aspect of the institution, seems to suggest that teachers have a more personal relationship with individual students, perhaps knowing them by name and used to interacting with them in a more direct way. This personal and more intimate contact (contrasting with the relative anonymity of students in other Italian institutions) contrasts with Silvia's positive positioning of teachers and students as being like 'a family', which she made in her first one-to-one interview (see section 8.3.1). As previously commented (Ibid), the family image suggests a parent-child relationship where students are treated as adolescents in need of help and guidance. Whereas Silvia initially found this intimate community a positive thing ('comfortable' as she described it) it appears to be a limitation in her second group interview, and the source of some frustration to her.

Maria ratifies Silvia's positioning that the problem with teachers is that they 'know you' (line 3), and contextualises this knowing in pedagogical terms, where the group is positioned as being treated as adolescents by being 'checked every single day' (line 5), presumably on their academic progress, as the teachers are positioned as not believing that they are mature and independently capable enough of progressing on their own.

In Maria's narrative about the trash party she highlights the smaller number of students at Sslmit as the reason why students know each other more than in other

Italian universities, and positions this knowing as being positive for student life (i.e. organising a party). However, when both she and Silvia talk about the teachers *knowing* the students, this becomes a negative aspect of Sslmit, linked to being treated like children at high school and not as mature individuals. Silvia's 'family' it seems has changed from being 'comfortable' in her first one-to-one interview, to being uncomfortable in her second group interview, something that appears to be shared by both Maria and the group in general.

In relation to Discourses, the smaller class sizes at Sslmit seem to facilitate a stronger sense of unity and cohesion among students, creating a lighter more playful environment (see section 8.2.3), which Maria appears to be invoking in her narrative about organising a 'trash party' (something she describes as only being possible because students know each other much more than in other institutions). However, these reduced class sizes are also positioned as creating a greater intimacy with teachers, rather than facilitating a more elevated sense of community where the teacher is perceived as being a member of that community, it creates tensions instead which position the teacher as being an outsider. These tensions are described by Maria and Silvia as being due to teachers continuing to treat students as high school adolescents, in need of constant guidance in their studies, and limiting their ability to claim the identity of mature, independent and 'grown up' learners.

In the final part of this chapter (sections 8.9 – 8.9.3) I examine one more narrative from the last group interview, which develops the parallels that the participants make between Sslmit and a high school, and in particular how this effects the way they perceive teachers in the institution and the influence this has on their studies.

8.9 Teacher-student relations – A narrative of Professional and Personal relationships

The following dialogue follows participant talk comparing Sslmit to a high school, analysed in section 8.8.

1 Matteo: can I say everything?
2 Alan: yes
3 Matteo: [ok
4 Alan: [anonymity
5 guaranteed here
6 Matteo: ok
7 Alan: anonymity
8 ((Federico laughs))
9 Silvia: (wow)
10 Matteo: I think the Sslmit is even worse than an high school
11 [and
12 Fed: [oh thank you
13 Silvia: (.) that's what I said before
14 Matteo: and (...) I think that the some professors (..) are
15 too close with the students (..)
16 Silvia: (ah ha) ((noise of possible agreement))
17 Alan: could you explain what you mean by close?
18 Matteo: close well er:::
19 ((I look at her while she is talking to maria in background))
20 Silvia: sorry ((in response to my look))
21 Matteo: (..) erm they: (7.0) ha ((laughing tone)) ((rosa snorts in a
22 laughing manner)) (2.0) I'm just trying to (.) don't say
23 the the names ((small laugh)) but it's quite difficult
24 Fed: no:=
25 Silvia: =well maybe teachers talk about (.) things that are not (.)
26 about school with students (.) so: it's true what
27 Matteo: yeah but I think there are several (.) projects here- [here in the Sslmit
28 Fed: [I think
29 you're referring to the fact that if you erm (.) do this extra
30 curricularal [activities
31 Matteo: [yes
32 Fed: like [theatre
33 Matteo: [yes

34 Fed: or stuff (get) in a really tight relationship=
 35 Matteo: =exactly
 36 Fed: with a professor cos it's even less people than in a classroom
 37 and you're not in a lesson so you're not just talking
 38 everybody's talking and doing stuff and it becomes more like
 39 a friendship than a a: professor student relationship [so: it's (less
 xxxxxxxx)
 40 Maria: [I think that still
 41 works (..) I think it can work as [long as you have a teacher
 42 Fed: [(xxx) ((Federico talking to Rosa))
 43 Maria: as like an organiser
 44 Matteo: yes=
 45 Maria: =but if you have it inside a group ((federico sniggers)) (.)
 46 ((federico laughs)) it really gets difficult to create a normal
 47 relationship like you you end up either hating or (...)
 48 Silvia: being friends
 49 Maria: being friends
 50 Fed: yeah but also I think it's not great for those who see it
 51 ((maria and silvia whisper to each other in background))
 52 Matteo: well I know students that knew the scores of some exams
 53 ((maria and silvia talking slightly more audibly to each other))
 54 [before
 55 Fed: [what?
 56 Matteo: they [came up
 57 Rosa: [the scores ((talking to federico))
 58 Matteo: on the: (.) baccheca ((italian for notice board))
 59 Maria: what? sorry
 60 Matteo: I know that there are (.) students who knew the: their the
 61 scores of the exams before they came up on the baccheca
 62 ((maria and silvia whisper))

(Group 2 interview. Recording time: 00:25:38: – 00:28:06. See appendix A: p.690,
 lines 809 – 898)

There are two narratives in this extract, one extended and co-constructed narrative (lines 10 -51), and a second embedded narrative (lines 52-62).

The initial narrative is only hinted at by Matteo, when he says ‘I think Sslmit is worse than a high school’ (line 10), but it does not develop subsequently. Both Federico and Silvia immediately ratify Matteo’s statement however (lines 12-13), as if they were aware of the narrative Matteo intends to relate to the group. Matteo however, has evident problems in actually beginning it, which is eventually left to Silvia. This ‘deferral ... of telling’ (Georgakopoulou, 2006: 123) requires some analysis before moving on to the actual analysis of the narrative itself. I therefore begin by examining the reasons for Matteo’s deferral and then approach the actual narrative through the lens of narrative positioning analysis.

Before Matteo’s comment about Sslmit, Maria had been talking about teachers checking students’ homework as though they were still in ‘high school’, and not treating them as ‘grown ups’, responsible for their own studies (see section 8.8). Matteo comes in subsequent to this, with a question for me that suggests that he is unsure if he should say what he is thinking

1 can I say everything?

Matteo’s question positions me as an institutional figure (a teacher with potential allegiances to the institution) and himself as a potentially vulnerable student. Matteo’s question suggests that he might be afraid that what he is about to say may possibly become public knowledge (with the implicit understanding that this may have negative consequences for him).

I affirm that Matteo can ‘say everything’ (line 2), and that his ‘anonymity’ is ‘guaranteed’ (lines 4-5), positioning myself therefore as a researcher with ethical obligations to Matteo, who is consequently positioned as a research participant and not a student.

Matteo, apparently reassured by my words, then makes a statement

10 I think the Sslmit is even worse than an high school

which is immediately ratified by Federico, (suggesting by his ‘oh thank you’, line 12, that it needed to be said but hadn’t until then) and Silvia, affirming that she had already said as much previously (‘that’s what I said before’, line 13), although this did not actually emerge in the data.

Matteo then goes on to qualify this statement as meaning that ‘some professors are too close with the students’ (lines 14-15). When I ask Matteo what he means by ‘too close’ he responds

21 erm (.) they: (7.0) ha ((laughing tone)) ((rosa snorts in a
22 laughing manner)) (2.0) I’m just trying to (.) don’t say
23 the the names ((small laugh)) but it’s quite difficult

Matteo’s long pause before answering (7 seconds), followed by a marked ‘ha’ and yet another pause (2 seconds), suggests his mental effort of ‘trying to don’t say the names’ (lines 22-23). Matteo positions me as an institutional figure again then, apparently sceptical of my attempt to position myself as a ‘researcher’ and not as ‘a teacher’, and displaying uncertainty as to whether or not he should identify specific teachers who are my colleagues. Matteo’s prolonged hesitation and final comment, ‘but it’s quite difficult’ (line 23), is followed by an interjection from Federico and a comment from Silvia

24 Fed: no:: =
25 Silvia: =well maybe teachers talk about (.) things that are not (.)
26 about school (.) with students (.)

Federico’s ‘no::’, with a long drawn out vowel, suggests irony in the form of mock surprise, and also that certain specific teachers’ names might be shared by the other

participants and not easily revealed to me (thus ratifying Matteo's positioning of me as an institutional figure).

Silvia comes in on the next turn, apparently tentatively interpreting what Matteo means by 'too close' as teachers saying things to students 'that are not about school' (lines 25-26). After Matteo's deferral to tell the narrative it is Silvia then who eventually initiates it.

8.9.1 Level 1 analysis: Positioning of characters in the narrative event

Silvia sets up the general scene then (or series of apparent recurrent scenes) where teachers say things to students 'that are not about school' (lines 25-26). This is not defined as being in any specific location, but potentially in multiple locations within the institution (or even outside it). Although Matteo appears to ratify Silvia's statement as being relevant to the narrative he is intending to tell (indicated by his initial 'yeah', line 27, showing concordance), he proceeds however to introduce an alternative framing for the narrative as being concerned with 'several projects here in Sslmit' (line 27). Before Matteo can specify what he means by 'projects', Federico intervenes next to give the narrative his own interpretation, as being about 'extracurricular activities like theatre or stuff' (lines 30-34), where it seems students '(get) in a really tight relationship...with a professor' (lines 34-36). Matteo ratifies this as a correct interpretation of what he meant to say, shown by his affirmation, 'yes' (line 33) and subsequent comment 'exactly' (line 35).

Federico continues the narrative, describing a scene with 'a professor' outside the institution, where there are 'even less people' (line 36), (presumably students), which highlights the potential for greater intimacy between them. Federico positions the students as socialising with the teacher, suggested by his description of them as all talking together and 'doing stuff' (line 38), unrelated to what they do 'in a lesson' (line 37). Federico then describes this activity as leading to a 'friendship' (line 39) between the students and the teacher, positioning the teacher as a friend rather than a member

of the institution (backgrounding his/her professional role), and the students as people in the social world forming sentimental attachments.

Maria's comment 'I think it can work' (line 41), responds to Federico's positioning of teachers as friends, as being potentially negative for students in general. The pronoun 'it' refers to Federico's description of a situation where a teacher is a friend, and the heightened stress on 'can' suggests that most of the time it *cannot* work. In order for 'it' to work (forming a friendship with a teacher), Maria positions the teacher as needing to be an 'organiser' (line 43) and not to be *inside* (line 45) the student group (meaning an equal perhaps, with no differentiation in power relations). This positions the teacher as someone who needs to remain an *outsider* then for Maria, a figure in control of students, a role similar to the teacher's institutional role in the class. What Maria appears to be describing is a teacher who remains a teacher (an organiser and an outsider), but who is on *friendly terms* rather than an actual intimate friend, in the sense of forming sentimental attachments with his/her students. That Maria is drawing a distinction between a teacher who is a *real* friend and a teacher who is friendly becomes more evident when Maria goes on to position the teacher who is an *insider* as creating problems for students, who might eventually end up hating him/her (line 47). Maria positions teachers who try to be insiders as being difficult to 'create a normal relationship' with (lines 46-47), where 'normal' suggests a normal teacher-student relationship (a 'normally' asymmetrical power relation between teacher and student, with clear boundaries of power and position between the two). Silvia's interjection 'being friends' (line 48), which finishes Maria's phrase ('you end up either hating or..'), suggests that she understands Maria to be making this distinction between teachers as 'real friends' with their students, and teachers as being on friendly terms with them.

Federico's turn, coming directly after this (line 50), sees him positioning 'those' students who see friendships between some students and teachers as being negative ('not great', line 50), ratifying Maria and Silvia's earlier positioning. His choice of the demonstrative pronoun 'those', positions all the students who are not in a friendship with a teacher as seeing teacher-student friendships from the same negative perspective, and seems to position himself therefore as being one of them.

Matteo comes in on the next turn (line 52) to introduce an embedded narrative about students knowing their exam results before they were officially published. In this narrative Matteo positions the teachers who are friendly with students as being unprofessional and giving unfair advantages and privileges to their student-friends. Emerging as it does after Federico's negative positioning of teachers with student-friends, Matteo's embedded narrative serves to present a practical example of why students might see teacher-student friendships in a negative light.

8.9.2 Level 2 analysis: Positioning in the narrative-telling event

The narratives emerge from talk that compares Sslmit to a 'high school'. Matteo makes the assertion that 'Sslmit is organised like a high school' earlier on in the interview (see section 8.8), which is ratified by the whole group, and Maria describes being in Sslmit as being similar to being in a high school by reason of its smaller student population, in contrast to other university departments in Italy (Ibid).

When I ask the group what are the 'bad sides' to being like a high school, both Silvia and Maria respond by saying that the teachers 'know you' and Maria goes further by positioning the teachers as not treating her as 'a grown up woman', as they always 'check' that she is doing her work. Matteo's question, 'can I say everything' and the narratives that emerge after, are contextualised by this talk then.

As already analysed (see section 8.9), the pre-narrative stage sees a (re)positioning of myself as a teacher (an institutional figure) and a researcher (an independent figure) by Matteo, as he negotiates the narrative he wants to tell.

Matteo's positioning of Sslmit as being 'worse than a high school', is ratified by Federico and Silvia. However, when Matteo is attempting to name the teachers in the narrative (those teachers presumably who make Sslmit worse than a high school) he appears to be unable to accept my attempt to position myself as a researcher, with ethical obligations to guarantee anonymity, and continues to position me as teacher in

the institution, with potential alliances to its members. Silvia, finally initiates the narrative, avoiding Matteo's evident problem of naming certain teachers by describing them collectively as 'teachers' (line 25). When Matteo attempts to continue the narrative however, contextualising it as being about 'several projects here in the Sslmit' (line 27), Federico positions him as not being a good narrator, positioning himself as a clarifier of what Matteo actually means to both the group and myself.

Matteo's back-channelling 'yes' (line 33) invites Federico to continue with his narrative, and his subsequent 'exactly' (line 35) ratifies Federico's version of the narrative, confirming that it is about 'extracurricular activities' (line 30), exemplified by the 'theatre'. This reference to theatre first emerged in the data in Silvia's second one-to-one interview, where she described herself acting in an annual theatre event organised by Sslmit, where students put on plays in their languages of study and were directed by teachers from each language section. Although Federico does not explain what he means by 'theatre' it appears to be implicitly understood by the group (and myself) as an example of what Federico means by extracurricular activity.

Federico continues by positioning the group as ratifying the narrative as being about the development of teacher-student friendships through extra-curricular activities. Maria interrupts Federico however to challenge his potentially negative stance towards all teacher-student friendships, and positions the group as ratifying such relationships as being potentially positive. Federico returns after though to continue his narrative, reaffirming the negative quality of these relationships by positioning all the students who see them as not being content to do so, and the group as ratifying that position.

Matteo finally introduces another narrative, about students knowing their grades before they are officially published, to ratify Federico's positioning, aligning with Federico's in his negative interpretation of teacher-student friendships, and positioning the group as ratifying the injustices that such relationships can incur on their student lives.

8.9.3 Level three analysis: connecting levels one and two to Discourses

In this co-constructed narrative, initiated by Matteo and developed by Silvia and Federico, the closer relationships between teachers and students is positioned outside the classroom, in scenes of extra-curricular activity. The Discourse that smaller teacher-student ratios increase a teacher's potential to integrate into student communities (see section 8.2.3) is challenged by the participants, as they narrate a break down in *professional* teacher-student identities. Maria's comment that such relationships 'can work' (line 41) is dependent on teachers remaining outside the student community, retaining a teacher identity which she describes as being 'like an organiser' (line 43), suggesting power differentials between the two, where teachers maintain their authority. The teacher identity becomes problematic however for Maria 'if you have it inside the group' (line 45) where more emotive responses can emerge, such as students 'hating' (line 47) their teachers. Federico ratifies this problem by positioning students who are not in these teacher-student relationships as being uncomfortable with them (it's not 'great for those who see it', line 50), and Matteo positions them as being an institutional problem, accusing some teachers of unprofessionalism in that they break university rules for their favoured few (i.e. telling them their exam marks before they are officially published).

8.10 Conclusions

In this chapter I analysed narratives that focused on the relationships between students and their teachers in the context of the institution, and how these relationships seemed to affect their perceptions of their identities as interpreting students. Central to the teacher-student relationship was a commonly shared view that Sslmit is unlike other Italian higher education institutions in its reduced teacher-student ratio in the classroom. Narratives about the atmosphere in smaller classes appeared to invoke Discourses in the first session of interviews (in the first term) that teachers in this context are more integrated into the student community (part of a 'family' as Silvia describes it) and facilitate better learning (having a level of teaching which is 'amazing' according to Matteo).

Narratives that emerged in the second interview session (in the second term) continued to focus on the smaller more intimate classes in Sslmit, although the teacher-student relationships were not positioned in pedagogical terms but rather in terms of personal rapport between the two. Federico distinguished Sslmit from other Italian institutions as being less about ‘you teach me and I learn’ but rather about how much teachers were liked and how much students wanted to know them, positioning Sslmit as not being a *normal* or *classic* Italian institution (see section 8.4). Other narratives presented an increasing tension in teacher-student relations where the intimacy of the Sslmit classroom (where teachers ‘know you’) made criticising teacher practices less tenable (as in Matteo’s narrative criticising English teachers for not allowing students to retake exams, but feeling ‘scared’ to say so in class, section 8.5) or limiting the students’ ability to claim mature student identities (as in Maria and Silvia’s narratives of being treated as high school children, section 8.8). Narratives also showed an increasing rejection of the teacher as part of the student community (a counter Discourse to smaller classes usually facilitating this process). Teachers are positioned as not providing enough help and services to students for example, when the smaller teacher-student ratio at Sslmit would suggest a greater potential for this (as in Matteo and Federico’s narratives again, sections 8.6.5 and 8.6.7).

The last group interview presents a co-constructed narrative, which questions student-teacher identities within the institution (see section 8.9), describing a break down in those identities due to over familiar relationships between some of the teachers and students through extra-curricular activities. The authoritative and professional role of the teacher is described as being threatened by such relationships, leading to accusations of unprofessionalism (as in Matteo’s claim that rules are not respected in cases where these relations exist, such as telling students their marks before officially publishing them). In this narrative, the small teacher–student ratio in the institution, with its emphasis on the personal relations between the two, has moved from a Discourse of teacher inclusion in the student community to his/her marginalisation, and confusion as to his/her identity as a teacher as well as the participants’ own identities as interpreter students in relation to them.

Chapter 9

Conclusions

9.1 Conclusions - Introduction

In this chapter I review my data analysis in the context of my research questions (see chapter 1, section 1.2), addressing each chapter of my data analysis (chapters 5-8) and drawing conclusions.

9.2 Teacher talk about interpreters

In chapter 5, I analysed narratives that were related specifically to teacher talk about the professional interpreter. The views expressed by two of the teachers (Moscato and Sabatelli) were analysed and interpreted as invoking two different Discourses that appeared to influence my participants' view of the professional interpreter's identity. Moscato invoked a Discourse of the interpreter as a *language expert*, positioning an interpreter's language competence (their lexical and grammatical knowledge about a language), above other socio-cultural communicative skills. This seemed to promote an image of the interpreter as a less visible presence in the *interpreted communicative event* (ICE), positioning the interpreter as a passive conduit for language communication and not as an active participant actively influencing the ICE as an engaged interlocutor. Sabatelli however, invoked a different Discourse, highlighting the interpreters' agentive and visible presence in the ICE, their active communicative competence and its relevance to the ICE; a Discourse that paid less attention to the professional interpreter's language skills (see section 1.4.2 for an examination of this in relation to *community interpreting*).

The participant narratives showed that Moscato's Discourse of the interpreter as a language expert was more dominant in their projected image of the professional

interpreter's identity, evidenced by their heightened concern to improve their language skills (see section 5.2.4), and much less concern for other factors in the ICE (with the notable exception of Maria). This positioned *language* as the principal resource for students wanting to become interpreters, by positioning the interpreter as being primarily a language expert.

Reasons for the predominance of this Discourse could be found in the institution's literature (its on-line statements about student goals) which highlighted language fluency and attaining high language levels (C1 in the CEFR), in both students' first and second languages by the end of their three-year degree, and which appeared to make only cursory references to other resources, such as acquiring socio-cultural knowledge and understanding (see section 5.2.5).

Another Discourse that emerged from teacher talk was more related to my participants' image of themselves as interpreter-students in the institution. Narratives described teachers and other institutional representatives as presenting Sslmit as a highly prestigious institution in Italian and European higher education. This seemed to invoke a neoliberal Discourse, a marketization of higher education institutions, where institutions are seen as offering 'products and services' and students are positioned as customers, invited to invest in them in order to further their careers (see section 5.2.7). The effects of this Discourse on my participants' image of themselves seemed to be a pressure to devote their lives to study in order to merit being part of one of *the best institutions* in the country. The consequences of this became more evident in relation to other aspects of their student identities in the institution, which I summarise further on in this chapter (see section 9.4).

Although the Discourses mentioned so far can be linked to wider Discourses, circulating in the institution and beyond, some teacher talk appeared to evidence more local and subjective discourses (discourses which did not therefore conform to Gee's 'Discourse' with a capital D, see section 2.10). Moscato's discourse for example, that the interpreter's life is a life of 'stress', appeared to be based solely on the teacher's own experiences as an interpreter (see section 5.2.8). Nevertheless, it seemed to have had an effect on some participants' image of the professional interpreter's identity,

continually (re-)emerging in their narratives over the whole research period (see section 5.2.8). This discourse positioned the participants as individuals who needed to accept and cope with a life of stress, which affected their stated future goals (see section 5.2.9), in some cases leading to an apparent rejection of the interpreting profession.

The importance of Moscato's discourse then (emerging very often in some narratives), might be explained by Bourdieusian theory (see section 2.12). The students' concept of professional interpreting could be likened to an imaginary *field*, whose description is dependent on the teacher-interpreter's portrayal of that field. Moreover, the importance given to the *capital* required to work in the field might also be determined by the *capital* the individual interpreter-teacher is perceived as having by students. Moscato's capital is highlighted in participant narratives, where she is reported as having worked as an interpreter for influential figures on the world stage (i.e. the Pope and the German chancellor, see section 5.2.9). Moscato's claim therefore that an interpreter's life is one of 'stress' appears to be given more weight in the participants' appraisal of the interpreter identity and how that corresponds or not to their own perceptions of their own *habitus*es (see section 2.12), leading some to reject it as being undesirable in relation to how they perceive themselves living their future professional lives.

The influence of individual teacher discourses then, particularly those teachers who are perceived as having large amounts of capital in the field of interpreting, appears to be salient in how students appraise the resources for becoming professionals in the field, and potentially directing students to make different career choices in the institution. This emerges in the continuity of a preoccupation with stress in interpreting in my participant narratives, and a stated rejection of the career in later stages of the research.

9.3 The professional interpreter and the *native speaker*

In chapter six I analysed the interview data which were specifically related to student perceptions of language as a resource for becoming professional interpreters, a

resource which had become evident in other narratives, positioning the interpreter as a language expert (see chapter 5).

What emerged from these narratives (most notably in the first session of interviews) was a distinct orientation towards native-speaker models (see section 6.4.3), as evidenced in what I refer to as the ‘Rutland’ narratives (see sections 6.2 -6.5). These were narratives that centred on one English teacher’s spoken Italian in the classroom, and how it was evaluated grammatically, lexically and orally by my participants as being as good, if not better, than a native Italian speaker’s. Rutland’s accomplishments in Italian were positioned by my participants’ as representing their own foreign language goals, and the goals that all students should have if they want to become interpreters. This also emerged in other narratives throughout the data (see section 6.4.1).

The Discourse that seemed to be invoked in these narratives was that native speaker levels are a benchmark for interpreter proficiency (see section 6.4), and that students need to obtain such levels in order to claim professional interpreter identities. Although the interview data showed that the institution makes no such claim (i.e. there were no narratives about institutional representatives telling students that they required native speaker language levels, or any evidence in my observations in the field), institutional literature (see section 6.4.2) does appear to show an implicit and explicit assumption that students enter the institution at one language *level* (B2) and that their objective is to move *upwards* (C1, in three years), ultimately towards levels of proficiency which my participants represented as being native-speaker levels. The level system (corresponding to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages), which is used to evaluate students’ progress in the institution (section 6.4.2), seems to position *interpreter students* then, first and foremost, as *language students*, and moreover frames interpreter-student goals in terms of quantifiable language acquisition over their three-year degree.

In my research, the participants’ apparent expectation that they should be interpreters by the end of their three-year degree (see sections 6.6 - 6.9), was complicated by the implicit assumption that that meant attaining native-like language levels in their

foreign languages by the end of that period. As was explicated however (see section 6.4.3), the native speaker model of language draws on the figure of an *idealised* native speaker, equating them, among other things (Ibid), with the questionable precept of ‘one country, one language, one mother tongue’ (Rampton, 1990: 97). Indeed, some participants (Matteo and Federico in particular, see section 6.4) saw the ability of attaining native-like speech, the apparent goal set by all the participants, as being dependant on living abroad (in *native speaker countries*), and hence unattainable within the institution.

The limitations of time in relation to acquiring native-like levels of spoken proficiency within the institution appeared therefore to be a source of great tension for the participants, and in some cases a reason for doubting their potential to become interpreters. Matteo (section 6.6) is concerned that he is not near enough to reaching native-like interpreter levels by the third year, as interpreting requires even more language (specifically lexis) than he imagined at first. Rosa (section 6.7) appears to abandon the career completely as there is even less time for her as she is not even a native speaker Italian, and Maria worries that her teachers are not doing enough to get her to the native-like level within three years (section 6.8).

The consequences of not having enough time also appear to make some participants concentrate only on the present and not to even consider their future careers. Silvia (section 6.10) describes herself as just studying the languages and not knowing if she will become an interpreter or not in the future. Matteo too (Ibid), describes himself as just trying to do his best (studying languages) and avoiding the ‘stress’ of thinking too much about his potential career as an interpreter.

9.4 Interpreter-Student identities in the institution

In chapter seven I looked at the relationships between students and their peers in the context of the institution, and how institutional Discourses may have shaped their interpreter-student identities over time.

An analysis of my participants' interview data initially revealed a tension between the students' approach to study and recreation (often referred to as having 'fun'). Rosa's narratives in particular positioned students in the institution as being 'nerds' (see section 7.2), students who are only concerned with study, giving little to no time to anything else in their lives (i.e. having fun). In describing this apparent Sslmit interpreter-student identity, Rosa positioned herself initially (in her first one-to-one interview, in the first term) as being an outsider, however by her second one-to-one interview in the second term (see section 7.3), she positioned herself as having acquired something of that identity as well, describing this change in her own character as being due to the nature of the institution itself.

Silvia also positioned Sslmit students as being overly concerned with their studies in the first group interview, to the point that they neglected their physical and mental health, expressed as not resting, or having fun, and being under considerable *pressure* by the institution and its representatives (see section 7.4). One of the sources of this pressure appeared to emerge in another of Silvia's narratives, in her first one-to-one interview (Ibid), where she narrated the opening day speech by Sslmit representatives, telling students that they were the best as they have entered the best institution, and recounting the pressure that that had put her under. Maria also told a similar narrative in her first group interview (see section 7.4.1), again narrating the opening day speech, where she reported the institution's representatives as telling students that they were the 'best of the best', with the implicit understanding that they perform accordingly.

The representation of the interpreter-student identity in the institution therefore appeared to be one of students devoted to study above all else in their academic lives. This appeared to be linked to Neo-liberal Discourses in the institution, by marketing itself as a *high-end* provider of academic 'services and products' in the interpreting sector (see section 7.5) and its students as privileged customers who are expected to be the best, as a consequence of their belonging to it. Moreover, Neo-liberal Discourses were also seen as joining with the Discourse of the interpreter as a language expert (see section 5.2.5) to further explain this positioning of interpreter students as living for their studies, as they are positioned as being continually required to improve their languages to meet institutionally perceived goals to become the best interpreters.

Another aspect of the interpreter-student identity that emerged through participant narratives was a heightened predisposition to be competitive in the classroom. This was seen as being linked to the same Discourses again, in that the institution's positioning of students as being the best, and the expectation that that means performing well in languages, appeared to increase displays of competent language use in the class. Some participant narratives in fact compared peer competition in their previous institutions of higher education to Sslmit (as in the cases of Matteo, Silvia and Federico, see sections 7.7 – 7.7.4), recounting a much more heightened level of competition among Sslmit students in the classroom.

Matteo's narratives about his Erasmus placement (see sections 7.8 -7.11) appeared to show a clear connection between student competence in languages and the institution's positioning of itself in relation to other institutions of higher education. The Erasmus co-ordinator tells Matteo that 'because our reputation is high ... we can't send beginners' to the top German institutions (see section 7.9), which seems to position students' language competence as a form of 'capital' (see section 2.12) in the higher education market, and positions Sslmit as having a considerable amount of that capital and wanting to maintain high standards in their *product*. Matteo's narrative (see section 7.9) about being told that he shouldn't compete for the top German universities because he is only a student of German as a second language (and therefore his level is too low), finds a response to this challenge in another narrative (see section 7.10) where he competes with first language students in German (improving his level), and wins a placement to Bonn university. These narratives show then how competition to succeed in Sslmit (and in other institutions) is tied to the *capital* of language competence, and how teachers are perceived as judging students on that competence.

Another form of capital that seemed to emerge from Matteo's Erasmus narratives was related to how students evaluated their languages in relation to other languages in the institution. Silvia's comment that German students think 'they are god' (see section 7.8) emerged from group talk about competition among students in general, where German students were positioned as being the most competitive of all. This heightened

competition appeared to be based on the German language itself, and how it was different from every other first language in the institution. Silvia positioned German students as feeling superior to their peers because of the greater capital their language appeared to afford them, a capital which was based on the German language being harder to acquire, as it differed much more from Italian or languages which Silvia described as being similar to Italian (Spanish and French), and was less globally spoken (unlike English). The manner in which both Silvia and Matteo described students of German (agreeing eventually that these were students of German as a first language of study), positioned them as feeling superior to all the other students in the institution, a positioning that was based (in Silvia's narrative) on the added capital that they perceived their language as having.

The narratives that emerged in the second session of interviews, in the second term, showed a shift in participant perceptions of competition in the classroom. Whereas in the first term competition was described by all the participants as being generic among all the students (see sections 7.7 – 7.7.4), in the second term it appears to be much more reduced. Some participants (Silvia, Maria) position only a small proportion of the students as engaging in it, and these are positioned as being negative characters in the class. Silvia positions competitive students as being 'too much into competition' and the rest of the students as having 'to deal with them', positioning herself as one of the latter (see section 7.12.1). Maria positions those students who are competitive as being *show-offs*, as they always want to show 'they know a lot about the language', positioning herself as not being one of them as well (see section 7.12.2). Federico however, although acknowledging that competition is much reduced (see section 7.12.5), no longer takes a negative stance towards it, seeing it as having generally been reduced among students due to increased personal relations.

Unlike the other participants, Matteo maintains that competition among students remains the same but that 'there is no room' for it in interpreting classes (which were initiated in the second term), as students 'just have to help' each other (see section 7.12.4). This absence of competition among students in interpreting lessons specifically, appears to be due to an inability for any single student to position

him/herself as being more of an expert than any other as the language is more complicated and diverse than in other lessons.

9.5 The role of teacher-student relations in shaping student-interpreter identities in the institution

In chapter eight, I analysed interview data which were related specifically to teacher – student relations, and the role these played in shaping my participants perception of the institution and their student-interpreter identities in the institution.

Narratives from the first interview session appeared to position Sslmit as a university department which was very different from other Italian university departments, specifically in relation to the much smaller teacher-student ratio found there. Matteo's narrative about coming to Sslmit from his first university in Rome (La Sapienza) positions Sslmit students as being privileged students in that they have more contact with their teachers and an opportunity to learn more (see section 8.2). This appears to invoke a Discourse that smaller teacher-student ratios improve learning outcomes, in part due to a more unified sense of community where teachers are more included in that community and students are given more support (see section 8.2.3). In this respect, Matteo positions Sslmit as being better at raising student learning levels than in his previous institution (Ibid).

In her first one-to-one interview, Silvia also highlights the smaller teacher-student ratio at Sslmit. Although she does not refer to the didactic advantages specifically, she positions the teachers as being part of an intimate, positive community ('a family') where she feels 'comfortable', unlike in her previous Italian department (Political Sciences). This again seems to invoke the same Discourse of smaller teacher-student ratios improving learning outcomes, as Silvia suggests by her 'comfortable' state that she will be able to study better in the Sslmit environment.

The difference between Sslmit and other Italian university departments also emerges in narratives from the second interview session. Federico, in his second one-to-one

interview, describes the classroom environment as being more ‘personal’, where the smaller teacher-student ratio is again portrayed as creating a relationship with teachers (as in Silvia’s description, above) which is unlike the impersonal ones in other Italian departments; positioning Sslmit students and teachers as not having ‘a classical university professor’ relationship (see section 8.4). Federico’s emphasis is on the type of relation that forms in this tight environment and not the didactic benefits. For Federico, Sslmit it is not about ‘you teach me and I learn’ but about liking teachers and being part of a community. In describing this community Federico invokes a Discourse, that teachers are conduits for channelling information (as exemplified by his phrase ‘you teach me and I learn’), but he appears to background it as not being the most important thing in Sslmit, positioning students as being more concerned with their social interactions with teachers and the community that forms in classrooms. There are didactic consequences however, as Federico describes students as choosing not to frequent the classes of those teachers they do not like. In this context then, learning appears to be based not on what the teacher teaches but on how much the teacher is part of a teacher-student community.

In Matteo’s narrative in his second one-to-one interview (see section 8.5), the didactic advantages of the smaller teacher-student ratios in Sslmit are no longer highlighted, and the community that initially appeared to include the teacher, now positions him/her as an outsider. In Matteo’s narrative he portrays teachers imposing arbitrary rules on students, which deny them the possibility of re-taking their exams and potentially getting better marks (damaging their academic careers). Matteo therefore appears to be invoking a counter-discourse, where smaller teacher-student ratios do not necessarily create tight teacher-student communities, as these smaller ratios also permit teachers to impose unfair rules on the *student community*, and due to their small numbers students are positioned as being intimidated and unable to voice their protests.

In the second group interview, criticisms of teacher-student relations appear to be prevalent. Matteo recounts another narrative about teachers denying students their rights to refuse exam marks (see sections 8.6.1 - 8.6.2) and Federico recounts a narrative about teachers not knowing the rules and regulations and being reticent to

communicate with students (see sections 8.6.3 – 8.6.4). Another narrative from Matteo develops the lack of clarity in student-teacher communications into a general criticism of the institution itself, which Matteo describes as being ‘confused’ (see sections 8.6.5 – 8.6.6). This narrative makes reference to the smaller teacher-student ratio in Sslmit again, but here it is used as a criticism, as smaller student numbers it is argued should mean more teacher help and support, which Matteo describes as not being forthcoming (a position ratified in another narrative from Federico, see sections 8.6.7 – 8.6.8). The positioning of the teacher as an insider in the first session of interviews, part of a close student-teacher community, changes in the second term then as teachers are increasingly positioned as being unfair in their relations with students and not providing students with services that their small numbers would appear to facilitate more.

Further criticisms of teacher-student relations emerged in the second group interview, where both Maria and Silvia complain of not being treated as *mature* students, positioning smaller teacher-student ratios as creating environments that are too close, where teachers’ knowledge of each individual student appears to make them overly controlling (a notable contrast to Silvia’s positive description of teacher-student relations as being like a ‘family’ in her first one-to-one interview, see section 8.1). Matteo, Federico and Silvia also narrate a co-constructed narrative where teacher-student relations are described outside the classroom (see section 8.9.3), where friendships are narrated as forming between individual teachers and students, and which the narrators portray as being unprofessional. This narrative further positions teachers as being outsiders to the over-all student community.

In sum, the interpreter-student identity portrayed in the first session of interviews (in the first term), is influenced by the close relation between students and teachers. This identity is initially positioned as being positive and privileged, linked to the image of the institution as being different to other Italian institutions in higher education, foregrounding the smaller teacher-student ratio, and invoking a Discourse that smaller classes improve teacher-student communities with consequential didactic benefits. However, by the second term, participant narratives show an increasingly negative interpretation of smaller teacher-student ratios in the institution, where teachers are

increasingly positioned as being outsiders to the student community (and at times even threatening to that community). This appears to invoke a counter-discourse to the one evident in first term narratives. Rather than increasing closer teacher-student communities and facilitating better learning, smaller teacher-student ratios are seen as increasing the teacher's power and control over students in a negative way; treating students as adolescents and not as mature students, and allowing teachers to introduce arbitrary rules, such as not allowing them to re-take exams. The interpreter-student identity is no longer positioned as being positive and privileged therefore, with respect to closer teacher-student relations as in the first term, but rather as being powerless and subject to potential injustices.

In the last chapter, chapter 10, I give a summary of my findings and make suggestions for further research.

Chapter Ten

Concluding summary, suggestions for further research and changes to interpreter training

10.1 Concluding summary

Although interpreters play an increasingly important role in today's society (see chapter one, section 1.1) there has not yet been any substantial empirical research into those institutions that train them (Ibid). The aim of this research then was to fill this gap by investigating an Italian higher education institution dedicated to training professional interpreters (the University of Bologna's Department for interpreters and translators).

My study was based on narrative research taken from an ethnographic perspective, specifically the positioning analysis of *small stories* as they emerged in talk-in-interaction informed by my own experiences in the institution and observational notes taken throughout the research period (see appendix B, field notes). This was seen as providing emic insights into how students constructed the identity of the professional interpreter and their own interpreter-student identities in the institution in relation to dominant Discourses.

My research questions were the following:

1. Over the period of their first academic year, how do interpreter-students perceive and negotiate Discourses in the institution, and how do these Discourses affect their constructions of the identity of a professional interpreter and the resources to become one?
2. How do these Discourses shape their identities as interpreter-students and affect their stated future goals.

In answer to my first research question, those Discourses that my participants appeared to ‘perceive and negotiate’ were related to two perceptions of the professional interpreter identity, the interpreter as a language expert, and the interpreter as a socio-culturally engaged interlocutor. The former Discourse presented the interpreter as an invisible conduit for channelling language, whilst the latter presented the interpreter as an agentive and visible player in the interpreted communicative event (ICE). These Discourses highlighted certain resources that my participants negotiated, the importance of language skills and the importance of communicative, socio-cultural, inter-relational skills. What emerged from the research was that the former appeared to be much more prominent, with participants identifying the professional interpreter as being a near *native-like speaker* and setting themselves *native speaker* goals as their ultimate aim in acquiring interpreter identities. These goals however were further negotiated within the context of the three-year degree and what appeared to be an implicit assumption by my participants that they should be professional interpreters at the end of this period. The ability of reaching such goals in such a limited period of time was shown to create tensions in the participants’ projected identities as interpreters, in relation to their present struggles with language learning as a vital resource and the apparent gulf between their perceived level and a native speaker level. This was further exasperated by a perception of native-speaker attainment as only being possible outside the institution, involving a substantial period of stay in the countries where the native language was spoken (something that the Erasmus programme was not positioned as being sufficiently capable of supplying).

In answer to my second research question, those Discourses which appeared to shape my participants’ interpreter-student identities within the institution, and which participants were continually attempting to negotiate through their interviews, were linked to neo-liberal Discourses which positioned them as belonging to a top institution in the higher education market, and the Discourse of the interpreter as a language expert again. These Discourses underpinned an image of the Sslmit student as someone who was always studying, giving little time to recreation, and who was highly competitive in the classroom. These identities were linked to a perceived image of Sslmit students being the *best* students, where best meant the best in their knowledge of foreign languages, and therefore dedicated to studying languages and

performing better in front of their peers (potentially to show themselves to be the best of the best).

Another Discourse which appeared to shape the identity of the interpreter-student, was the Discourse that smaller teacher-student ratios create closer teacher-student communities with improved learning. Although this Discourse appeared to be invoked by some participants in the first stage of the research (in the first term), singling out Sslmit as a special institution within the Italian higher education system and positioning themselves as being privileged over other Italian students, it developed into a counter-discourse by the second term. This counter-discourse portrayed Sslmit students as being ultimately unhappy with smaller teacher-student ratios as they positioned themselves as expecting greater help and support from teachers, which was described as not being forthcoming. They also positioned themselves as being more vulnerable to the potential abuses of a teacher's power, due to the nature of smaller classes where teachers knew students individually (and could therefore identify individuals as the source of opposition), denying them a collective voice of protest, which the relative anonymity of larger classes might afford them. Moreover, smaller teacher-student ratios outside the classroom, in extra-curricular activities, were portrayed as leading to 'friendships' between some teachers and individual students which were perceived by some participants as leading to unprofessional conduct in relation to institutional protocols (such as letting students know their exam marks before they were officially posted) and potential favouritism in the class. Matteo and Federico positioned the institution itself as being responsible for allowing these circumstances to exist, Matteo in particular describing Sslmit as being 'confused' in clarifying its rules and regulations to both the student and the teaching body. This counter-discourse then challenged the Discourse that smaller teacher-student ratios might increase teacher inclusiveness in the teacher-student community and facilitate a better classroom environment, with potential better learning out-comes. The teacher was increasingly positioned as being an outsider to the student community and in some cases responsible for creating tensions in the class.

A different form of discourse also emerged in the research, which was identified as a teacher's subjective representation of the interpreter identity. The influence of this

discourse on the participants was considered as being due to the perception of that teacher's *capital* in the *field* of interpreting, making their appraisal of resources more or less relevant to students' lives, and their image of themselves as potential future interpreters.

10.2 The institution and the student: Differing perceptions

What emerged from the research was a certain mismatch between the institution's stated goals and the students' interpretation of those goals. The institution sets a C1 level as a benchmark for students by the end of their third year, in both their first and second languages of study. This referral to the 'Common European Framework of Reference for Languages'⁴⁶ is presumably intended to refer not only to a student's linguistic competence however, but also to their socio-cultural sensitivities to language as the framework description makes quiet clear,

(i)n an intercultural approach, it is a central objective of language education to promote the favourable development of the learner's whole personality and sense of identity in response to the enriching experience of otherness in language and culture.

(The Council of Europe's Language Policy Unit, 2016:1)⁴⁴

What emerged in the research however was that students perceived this 'C1' level as being purely a *language* requirement, positioning language as being in somehow distinct from culture. Although I had already some perception of the vital role that language appeared to be playing in students' lives before beginning the research, I was unaware to what extent the impact of such an approach might have had on excluding other aspects of an interpreter's professional identity in their appraisal of the future role.

The importance of language over culture, and the apparent separation of the two, was perhaps reinforced by the institution's course taxonomies, where first year students are

⁴⁶ https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf

required to take a module in ‘Lingua e Cultura’ (Language and Culture), suggesting perhaps two separate and distinct entities. From the actual data, Moscato’s advice to Matteo that he use his time in Germany (his Erasmus period abroad) to ‘just learn the language’ might also explain how teachers in the institution may also be responsible for students viewing language and culture as being separate. In sum, the C1 requisite imposed by the institution appears to be interpreted by students as an encouragement to focus specifically on language in its grammatical and lexical sense (not its socio-cultural dimension), and to attain very high proficiency levels.

These high language levels emerged often in the data as being equated with *native speaker-like* performance. The reason for this is perhaps due to the presence of native speaker teachers in the classroom, a fact that the institution advertises as evidently being an important factor in the students’ education. For example, in its course description for the second cycle degree one of the reasons given for prospective students to choose the degree is

because Forlì offers an advanced training program, organized into targeted language teaching and specialist courses, taught by *native speaking* professionals⁴⁷.

(My emphasis)

Another important area of potential contrast between institutional goals and student perceptions is in the final objective of the first cycle degree. The data from my research suggests that many students see the three-year degree as leading to a professional qualification as an *interpreter*. However, the institution describes their final degree as ‘Intercultural Linguistic mediation’⁴⁸ and the graduates from this degree as ‘mediators’, and not interpreters. Certainly, the second cycle degree in ‘Conference Interpreting’ clearly identifies the student as a professional conference

⁴⁷<http://corsi.unibo.it/Magistrale/Interpretazione/Pagine/Presentazione.aspx#regolamento>

⁴⁸ <http://www.scuolalingue.unibo.it/it/corsi/corsi-di-studio/corso/2015/8059>

interpreter after his/her studies⁴⁹, but the title of interpreter is never mentioned with regards to the first cycle degree. The question posed therefore was, why do students perceive it in this way?

The difference between what is a mediator and what is an interpreter is perhaps unclear, and is not clarified by the institution's literature. Moreover, for the new students that enter Sslmit there is a clear suggestion indeed, on the side of the institution itself, that they will be trained interpreters by the end of their first cycle degrees. Although the degree programme is entitled 'Intercultural Linguistic Mediation' (Mediazione Linguistica Interculturale) and refers to the formation of intercultural 'mediators' in its on-line literature, as previously stated, there is nevertheless a blurring of distinctions between *mediators* and *interpreters*. In the same literature, the future graduate's role in a working environment ('Funzione in un contesto di lavoro') is described as involving 'interpretazione di trattativa', which in English would be translated as 'liaison interpreting'. Furthermore, the very title of the school itself (The Advanced School for *Interpreters* and Translators in Modern Languages⁵⁰) might suggest that any qualification obtained would be interpreter related. The fact that by the end of their first year students were still referring to themselves as future interpreters after their three-year degree, suggests that the institution had not clarified the difference between a *mediator* and an *interpreter*, and what students were exactly professionally trained for after their studies.

Although the institution's curricula for the three-year degree is evidently aimed at training students to be *community interpreters* (see section 1.3), or perhaps one should say community 'mediators', the students' awareness of the different roles involved in community and conference interpreting appear to be confused, as emerged in the data.

The emphasis on acquiring language skills above socio-cultural understandings and inter-personal communication seems to index the role of the conference interpreter much more than the community interpreter (Ibid). Indeed, apart from Maria, none of

⁴⁹ <http://www.scuolalingue.unibo.it/it/corsi/corsi-di-studio/corso/2015/8060>

⁵⁰ Now renamed 'Department for Interpreters and Translators' (D.I.T.).

the other participants placed much emphasis on the latter, preferring instead to highlight language acquisition as the principal aim of their studies, and referring on many occasions to the need to speak ‘perfectly’ and/or ‘like a native speaker’.

10.3 Suggestions for changes to the institution and its curricula

Proposals for changing aspects of the institution’s curricula or organisation emerged through my research (see section 10.2, above) with the ultimate aim of improving the professional training of interpreters.

Specific to this research, the collectively held view among my participants that students should be *interpreters* after their three-year degree needs perhaps to be addressed, by clarifying the objectives of the first-cycle degree in relation to the second-cycle degree, and the different forms of interpreting that exist.

The second-cycle degree quite clearly aims to train students to be *conference interpreters* (see section 1.3) and the general orientation of the first-cycle degree appears to have the objective of preparing students to be *community interpreters* (Ibid). However, the difference between a community interpreter (liaison or dialogue interpreter) and a conference interpreter has been shown to be quite distinct, with very different potential *interpreter identities* in play (see sections 1.4.1 - 1.4.2). For example, the conference interpreter, working in a booth with headphones (see section 1.4.1), might be expected to have a very different experience of interpreting from the community interpreter, working perhaps with immigrants in a hospital, police station or at immigration control (Ibid).

The Discourse that interpreters are invisible conduits for channelling language appears to be a dominant Discourse in my participants’ projected identity of the interpreter, with an emphasis on language as the dominant resource, and a positioning of the interpreter as a language expert. However, this appears to be more applicable to a conference interpreter than a community interpreter. The counter Discourse that interpreters are visible and agentic, actively effecting the outcome of the ICE,

appears to be more applicable to the identity of the community interpreter and places an emphasis on a range of resources in addition to language (see section 1.4.2). By actively exploring the different identities of these two types of professional interpreter in the students' first year, teachers might reduce the emphasis on language learning as a student's primary concern, as well as an apparent implicit assumption that they require *native speaker* levels to become interpreters (particularly in relation to the time restrictions of a three-year degree) and the pressures that appears to bring.

Moreover, teachers might also explore the whole Discourse of the *native speaker* to reflect the changing world and the changing role of interpreters in it. This might entail introducing courses that explore the concept of the *native speaker*, challenging its predominance through different perspectives such as *English as a Lingua Franca* (ELF), and *World Englishes* (WE), (see section 6.4.3).

The changes I have proposed above might also influence the interpreter-student identity in the institution, reducing competition on language performance in the classroom and increasing the importance of cultural knowledge for example, or reducing tensions to reach potentially unrealisable goals, such as native-like speech in three years.

10.4 Unanswered questions: Improving future research methods

Central to this research project was the aim of accessing the cultural world of the students in the institution, to provide emic insights into how they perceived themselves and their future careers within the context of the institution; particularly in relation to its Discourses and practices, and how they play out in everyday life. However, many questions were left unanswered that any future studies should perhaps address.

Although it was very productive working with one *tight-knit* group over the period of their first year in the institution, a greater in-depth understanding of their socio-cultural worlds might have emerged if the interviews could have been carried out on a more regular basis, i.e. once a month, as opposed to once every three to four months.

There was of course the risk that such demands on the participants' time might have led to a feeling of resentment, and a potential break down in relations with myself. If time was less of an issue with regards to the data gathering period (usually one year in doctoral research) a larger longitudinal study with the same group would have been preferable, following their progress to the end of their degrees, investigating the wider significance of institutional Discourses on their entire academic trajectories.

With regards to narrative research from an ethnographic perspective, questions of the scale and magnification of the participants' socio-cultural worlds were salient. How much can such research claim to see, and what does it inevitably leave out? Certainly, it is more than a micro discourse analysis, the turn by turn construction of meaning in the flow of discourse (such as conversation analysis), but it is also much less than a full ethnographic study, attempting to draw in as many experiences of a cultural group's life as possible. On reflection, as a researcher, I would have liked to enrich the research more by enlarging the ethnographic perspective, placing the narrative analysis in a more detailed socio-cultural context. This might have been facilitated by recording the participants directly in the classroom environment, to listen to their interactions with their colleagues and the teacher, and compare and contrast this data with the interview data. Moreover, interviews with the participants' teachers would have added an additional and richer set of perspectives on how institutional Discourses played out in their approach to teaching interpreting. Another ethnographically enriching approach might have been occasioned by playing the interviews back to the group and eliciting their responses to my observations and interpretations of what was going on, and/or giving them my field notes and asking them to comment on the observations I had made.

Having considered all these variations on my actual research methods I would certainly adopt one or more of these in any future research projects.

10.5 The research as an 'Italian' case study: Relevancies for Italian institutions of higher education with regard to professional interpreter training, and potentially beyond

The Sslmit case study revealed a disjuncture between the institution's stated objectives and the students' interpretations of them (see section 10.2). In particular, the role of language learning in relation to becoming a professional interpreter appeared to be taken as a *de facto* essential, and dominant requisite by the latter as a means of attaining a professional status in the field. This seemed to occur despite the evident importance of developing students' socio-cultural awareness in what is essentially the training of professionals in the field of 'community interpreting'. The evident lack of awareness of exactly what students are studying to become in their first cycle degrees, and the resources required to achieve such goals, is a serious issue that needs to be addressed by the institution, and leads to a wider consideration of professional training in other similar institutions in the Italian context.

This research revealed that institutional curricula may be conveying the wrong message to students, either through the Discourses it communicates implicitly or explicitly, or by the way that students interpret it (see section 10.3). Institutions therefore need to examine their curricula more carefully to identify and evaluate the specific Discourses that they are communicating and to respond to research which investigates how curricula is interpreted by students, regardless of institutional presuppositions of *how it should be interpreted*.

My conclusions in this research might have relevancy for institutions seeking to train professionals in other fields, apart from interpreting, which might lead to similar research in these as well (see section 10.6), widening the debate about curricula in general and questioning how relevant and effective it is in catering to the needs of aspiring professionals. The following question therefore needs to be addressed: are the curricula of Italian higher education professional training institutes adequate to the needs of a students' development in their chosen field?

Although this research did not set out to challenge my participants' perspectives on becoming professionals in their chosen field, it is hoped that research such as this might ultimately lead to their considering alternative perspectives, through

institutional changes in curricula, but also through the debate and reflection that might be generated consequently.

10.6 Suggestions for further research

The use of narrative research from an ethnographic perspective was shown to give emic insights into the lives of aspiring professionals in the field of interpreting in a higher education institution in Italy, describing the continuities and changes in their projected identities both as interpreter-students and future professionals. In particular, a *small story* approach, adopting narrative positioning, allowed for an analysis of how identities are negotiated in co-constructed situated talk, both in the narrative event as well as in the narrative-telling event. Analysis of small stories over time, combined with ethnographic data to explore the influence of wider Discourses on those stories, give the researcher a perspective on the continuities and changes in an individual's orientation towards the social world of the institution and how they position themselves in that world. Furthermore, the emergence of patterns in narratives over time (i.e. the re-occurrence of certain themes or story-lines) can provide insights into the Discourses they are negotiating and positioning themselves towards, in order to make sense of the field they are attempting to become experts in.

My research explored student identities (as students in the institution and as projected future professionals) in an Italian first-cycle degree at Bologna's department for interpreters and translators, providing insights into an Italian institution. Further research might examine similar first-cycle degree programmes in other European countries, to compare and contrast this Italian case study with those. Furthermore, within the present institution under examination, similar research might be carried out on students frequenting post-graduate courses in interpreting, even potentially the same students in the present research cohort (see section 10.4), in an attempt to trace changes and continuities in their projected identities over their whole academic careers in the institution.

Research into institutions which might have already implemented some of the proposals I have made here with regard to interpreting (see section 10.3) might also be of interest in evaluating the potential for positive change in interpreting institutions in general, with the aim of improving the training of the increasingly important figure of the professional interpreter in today's society (see chapter one, section 1.1).

Specifically related to the Italian context, this form of research might be extended to other higher education institutions for professional training to examine the effects of curricula on their developing identities as future professionals in other fields, potentially critiquing curricula and initiating debates on changes to it in order to improve professional training in general.

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Appendix A

Interview transcripts

First interview session

Federico 1 (Fe): First interview

- 1 Alan: if you had imagine your life with
2 regards to languages as if it were a
3 book (.) the different chapters and
4 moments in your life how would you
5 describe this book?
- 6 Fed: I I th- think mainly I studied
7 english from the beginning
8 because my mother wanted me
9 and my sister to know english so
10 we had a (.) er:m various visitors
11 who were from england or
12 australia the classic students but
13 at the beginning it was just a
14 studying so: that wouldn't (.) I
15 think m: count
- 16 Alan: how old were you?
- 17 Fed: er: from (...) between 3 and 6 (.)
18 up to: 10 years old
- 19 Alan h hm
- 20 Fed: but the elementary school I I
21 think it's more of erm (.) I liked
22 (.) dialects because i- my: mother
23 is from bologna my father is from
24 marche and e:r m we didn't have
25 the er:m the grandfather or
26 grandmother who spoke in
27 dialect but for example my father
28 knew always (.) he knows e:r lots
29 of dialects since he talks them
30 very well I don't know why I

31 have no idea and when I was a
 32 child I I was really (.) I really
 33 liked it so i: would er everything
 34 I know dialect is through him or
 35 some other people's (.) er
 36 grandparents and e:r that's what I:
 37 (.) cared more of and I I ne-
 38 never was much for italian really
 39 e:r I never liked e:r writing in
 40 itself or nobo- I wasn't creative
 41 e:r particularly I couldn't if you
 42 would give me the classic
 43 homework for kids e:r describe
 44 your day I wou- would just stare
 45 at the paper because y- you didn't
 46 know what to write and couldn't
 47 m: (.) think immediately and n:
 48 put it into words in italian so I
 49 think its (.) as a kid it was yes
 50 dialects m: bolognese and
 51 marchigiano but (..) middle
 52 school I was trying to think but I
 53 see major school as a kind of
 54 intellectual wasteland it always is
 55 ((laughs)) nothing really
 56 intelligent comes out of it was
 57 (xx) yeah it's it's not really the:n
 58 high school english surely I
 59 studied english in out of school
 60 seriously like in [n:
 61 Alan: [where?
 62 Fed: the british school (.) in bologna
 63 and in e:r well later in the first
 64 year in university e:r at the italian

65 american association and then
 66 with the teacher of italian
 67 association but privately so that's
 68 surely english (or)
 69 Alan: what sorry can I ask what school
 70 you went to?
 71 Fed: e:r liceo righi
 72 Alan: liceo?
 73 Fed: righi (.) scientific high school
 74 Alan: scientific high school
 75 Fed: it's no (.) it doesn't really e:rm
 76 (..) have anything to do with
 77 languages because it I didn't I
 78 never used to think of it as a job
 79 it was something I liked to do e:r
 80 something I I knew I knew better
 81 than other people
 82 Alan: h hm
 83 Fed: e:rm in highschool that was
 84 pretty obvious because I (xxx)
 85 you know how it is taught R:nd I
 86 had fun a:nd it was (3.0) spare
 87 time e:r amusement let's say
 88 Alan: was it just one language or other
 89 [languages
 90 Fed: [no:
 91 only one language I never I
 92 wanted to to e:r start spanish with
 93 high school but e:r there was a
 94 mix up with classes and I ended
 95 up in a even more scientific
 96 class and couldn't maintain the
 97 spanish one so: I just stayed with
 98 the english

99 Alan: hm
 100 Fed: and then e:r (...) I'm really (..)
 101 fell for english m: last year really
 102 because I was in med school (.)
 103 e:r
 104 Alan: s- sorry you were where?
 105 Fed: medicine school
 106 Alan: a ha
 107 Fed: and for the first 2 years but after
 108 the first year I was (..) m-
 109 crushed mainly ((laughs)) by it
 110 Alan: h hm
 111 Fed: and it was the only thing I would
 112 do as a:: (..) really as fun I am not
 113 a sport people e:r sport person
 114 don't really like sweating and I
 115 don't see the point so ((small
 116 laugh)) it was my: hobby shall
 117 we say it sounds ridiculous
 118 because it was watching films in
 119 english and reading books in
 120 english and in one year I read
 121 about 25 books and e:r but it's
 122 also because I wasn't studying
 123 much but that's another part
 124 Alan: hm
 125 Fed: a:nd e:rm but also there was for
 126 example (.) from the last year of
 127 high school and the first year of
 128 medicine I would erm (..) when I
 129 started to think of going into
 130 medicine i e:rm seeing it now I
 131 guess (.) i: turned into a more (..)

132 well cynical I've always been
 133 more: rational probably in state
 134 of mind so also in talking e:r I
 135 think it's (.) e:r m: (..)
 136 overthinking and knowing what
 137 you're saying before you're
 138 saying it being e:r (..) I the word
 139 that comes to mind is scientific
 140 but not scientific meaning e:r
 141 chemicals but e:r precise
 142 Alan: h hm
 143 Fed: and so maybe that's (.) that
 144 would be (.) yes maybe a stage
 145 would be that or a chapter would
 146 be that (.) e:rm (...)
 147 Alan: so the change from medicine to
 148 ((Filippo laughs)) that sounds
 149 like a chapter
 150 Fed: yeah that sounds like a chapter I
 151 hope it's it will be a chapter and
 152 no I hope it will be more of a
 153 book than a chapter because a
 154 chapter ends ((small laugh)) a:nd
 155 e:rm m: (...) right now I like it
 156 ((small laugh)) [it's ehm
 157 Alan: [wh- what
 158 happened to make you change
 159 from medicine to languages?
 160 Fed: e:r I realised medicine was not I
 161 liked it I liked it I like it I don:: I
 162 don't deny what I chose and what
 163 i: fell for e:r I still like but I I
 164 never liked it enough to study
 165 medicine probably

166 Alan: hm
 167 Fed: e:rm it's very much like the
 168 school because you have to really
 169 (.) really want it and to: it doesn't
 170 have to be it's just something you
 171 like but something you are (.)
 172 really passionate about cos
 173 otherwise you can get yourself
 174 through it's e:rm pointless it's
 175 it's no longer high school you
 176 don't have to just get through it
 177 but to want to (xx)
 178 Alan: so why did you decide to do
 179 medicine in the first place?
 180 Fed: oh because i was sure it was and
 181 because I was sure it was one of
 182 those jobs you you can get out of
 183 there and more or less have a job
 184 it's e:rm not always (.) the best
 185 but you always get a job and it
 186 was e:rm (..) let's say (..) well
 187 actually it was the last 20 years
 188 my father had problems but but I
 189 came to know it when I was 15
 190 more or less so I thinks it's e:r I
 191 think it had an influence on me
 192 and e:r (.) knowing that (2.0) i: it
 193 gave me a more precise idea of
 194 how difficult the working er
 195 world is so I think it's a: it has an
 196 influence surely then I would
 197 always see my mother working
 198 and I liked it I mean e:r
 199 Alan: she worked

200 Fed: sh- she she's a doctor
 201 Alan: ah
 202 Fed: and e:r she she also works at
 203 home because she's a radiologist
 204 so she would do the exams at
 205 home
 206 Alan: h hm
 207 Fed: and I liked it I liked the: e:rm m:
 208 the human body and how it
 209 works and it's e:r and so and I
 210 was (.) I was never good at em
 211 say italian and history or
 212 geography or math or: so science
 213 and biology was pretty much
 214 where I was good and I wouldn't
 215 and I didn't see english as a (.) as
 216 a thing of work as a as a job sorry
 217 so I as an amusement
 218 Alan: h hm
 219 Fed: so=
 220 Alan: =you mentioned your father I
 221 don't understand your father
 222 Fed: em: he had a: he let's say
 223 inherited the: e:rm from my
 224 grandfather a:: company and e:r
 225 there were (..) of course the
 226 classic thing my grandfather had
 227 this company in the best period
 228 you can have it my father had it
 229 ((laughs)) in the worst period you
 230 can have it a:nd e:r it was a slow
 231 decline also a couple of problems
 232 as e:rm he trusted the wrong

233 people no no I'm not talking
 234 mobs (.) kind but he but he got (..)
 235 he got screwed mainly e:rm so
 236 that kind of thing in a company
 237 that sets you off on the wrong
 238 path he: got into the crisis also so
 239 it ((laughs)) all crumbled together
 240 and in the end of course it (..)
 241 (xxx) it's not like e:rm (...) I saw
 242 him for example I would never
 243 get into economics and my father
 244 once asked me if it was (.)
 245 because I saw how many
 246 problems he had a:nd but no it
 247 never influenced me that way it
 248 didn't cut e:r (..) jobs off because
 249 I'm: had to e:r get away from that
 250 it was just er (4.0) I don't really
 251 see what's fascinating in having a
 252 company and running a company
 253 (xx) but still it e:r (2.0) as a kid
 254 it's well maybe I was not a kid 15
 255 years old but i:t (xx) you and it
 256 gives you a really e:rm strongly
 257 an idea of what's e::r (.) a job
 258 Alan: uhum
 259 Fed: and it's not always good for
 260 example I had the healthy
 261 comparison between my mother
 262 who::: who she works 10 hours a
 263 day and (.) for the past 5 years (.)
 264 6 and a half e:r days a a:: week so
 265 it's not like I had the perfect job
 266 part time overpaid and my father

267 but still e:rm (2.00) you feel like
 268 you have to put yourself in the
 269 condition to have less problem at
 270 all in the world (.) so (3.0) I think
 271 it's why medicine came as a as
 272 an option also (.) m: of course
 273 there's doctor house but that's
 274 another thing ((laughs))
 275 Alan: so when you decided to stop (.)
 276 doing medicine how did you (.)
 277 come up with SSMLIT?
 278 Fed: e:r at first I just wanted to: give
 279 up studying a:nd I thought good
 280 a:nd e:r but still it's (.) stupid
 281 because I had nothing in my
 282 hands a:nd e:r the reason why I
 283 would have liked to leave italy
 284 and go (.) work somewhere was
 285 to learn another language ((small
 286 laugh)) so I thought (put 2 and 2)
 287 and I said yes why not learn
 288 another language and go work
 289 somewhere else e:rm (..) study
 290 and develop that (xxx) and I can't
 291 understand the people who say
 292 that interpreting has always been
 293 my dream or maybe when I was a
 294 kid you know the (austrian accent)
 295 the interpreting doesn't really
 296 come to your mind and and it
 297 was not my dream I told it was an
 298 amusement for most of my life (..)
 299 but I also think that it's even
 300 probably better because if (.) it is

301 always I have done for fun (.) I
 302 hope it will stay that I mean it's
 303 not just a job or the job or the job
 304 you have to do but also what you
 305 like to do ehm: (..)

306 Alan: and how are your experiences
 307 here now since you started your
 308 degree?

309 Fed: (2.0) pretty good really e:rm (.)
 310 it's really different fro::m from
 311 medicine so I can I can say I can
 312 (..) make a comparison because
 313 it's the hours more or less are the
 314 same (.) here we have
 315 homeworks (..) which is weird
 316 for me because I have stopped
 317 doing homework in 4th class
 318 more or less and ((laughs)) e:r
 319 there you had to just e:r study
 320 study study and break your head
 321 on a book here it's not just that
 322 not only that you have to: (...)

323 (or at least for me) you also have
 324 to like it you can't learn a
 325 language if you (..) if you don't
 326 fall for it e:rm (...) right now I
 327 am ((laughs)) (also my life
 328 started immediately) with the (.)
 329 also with the Russian and Slovak
 330 Slovak (this is?)

331 Alan: Slovak yeah

332 Fed: Slovak (.) and I think it's better
 333 because I'm: (...) m: f- for
 334 example right now I have it I

335 have e:r on average 34 hours a
 336 week which for the past (term)
 337 you know 6 weeks I become
 338 between 28 and 36 but e:rm
 339 knowing myself I know I have to
 340 be e:rm (..) busy (..) otherwise I
 341 am (...) decline ((laughs))
 342 Alan: h hm
 343 Fed: and e:r:m (2.0)
 344 Alan: what's the atmosphere in the
 345 classes like? in general any
 346 languages any classes
 347 Fed: e:r ((exhales)) that (..) pretty
 348 much is e:r similar to medicine
 349 there is a lot of you don't notice
 350 it the first month because
 351 everyone is new and everyone is
 352 just em: (..) looking around
 353 Alan: h hm
 354 Fed: (..) but you realise the: e:rm (..)
 355 how people (..) e:r watch each
 356 other and already know that there
 357 is an erm:: (..) a fight in the in that
 358 you have to be the better one and
 359 e:r because it's another faculty
 360 you're just (piece of) knowledge
 361 it's e:r of course there's a: there's
 362 a part of intelligence in it it's it-
 363 it's not (xxx) to put a brick on
 364 another brick but e:rm a huge
 365 chunk of it is knowledge so
 366 knowing that you're knowing it
 367 better you're

368 e:r which is not really my thing
 369 I've never really been e:rm
 370 competitive and e:r (...) and I
 371 don't put myself in (.) in the
 372 situation to be I mean e:rm m:
 373 Alan: how does this competitiveness
 374 come out what do you see or
 375 [hear?
 376 Fed: [ah y- you you
 377 Sh- I think the moments where
 378 it's more obvious are the
 379 translation classes I think and for
 380 me it's really funny e:rm because
 381 I don't see the point but e:r you
 382 see:: when: someone corrects
 383 someone else e:r not correct as
 384 you're talking you make a
 385 mistake and someone else
 386 corrects you that's just to (punch)
 387 but er e::rm (..) like I make my
 388 translation and e:r someone else
 389 e:rm (.) corrects you I see people
 390 really taking it personally which
 391 is ((laughs)) really stupid because
 392 it's the concept of translation that
 393 it there is somebody probably
 394 even less competent than you
 395 correcting it and making it
 396 different e:rm (...) you cannot
 397 take it personally it's e:r (.) how
 398 it works it's in a translation you
 399 can think you are the one saying
 400 it and stays like that

401 Alan: how do you see this? (.) I mean
 402 you say they take it personally
 403 but how how is that manifest?
 404 Fed: (..) e:rm the: (.) back and forward
 405 the: e:rm (...) mostly no one ends
 406 up saying oh yes you're right and
 407 that that I was wrong or: just the
 408 the: just reality and e:r you you
 409 realise that often it starts ((makes
 410 facial expressions and hand
 411 movements))
 412 Alan: you mean bodily gestures
 413 Fed: yeah bodily gestures right a:nd
 414 e:r I don't know: (..) e:rm the
 415 after comments (.)
 416 Alan: such as
 417 Fed: [so::
 418 Alan: [after comments ((filippo laughs))
 419 for example?
 420 Fed: oh for example like they they
 421 don't generally turn into e:r that's
 422 also amusing for me they don't
 423 just say on e:r oh I think he:
 424 translates horribly they get in
 425 ((small laugh)) personally e:r I:
 426 don't know i: think he is e:r (.) I
 427 can't think of anything of course
 428 right know but e:rm I don't know
 429 (..) they get a like e:rm (...)
 430 joking on people and e:rm (.)
 431 Alan: making jokes about?
 432 Fed: making making jokes about
 433 people and e:r (.) e:rm (..) a not

434 in a particular sick way I mean
 435 it's
 436 not like (they're all crumbling)
 437 and e:r (grumbling) and hating
 438 each other no of course not but (.)
 439 you see it more than in a: I don't
 440 know in a (...) history class
 441 Alan: hm
 442 Fed: e:r or: erm: I don't know (.) and
 443 also in law I've got also friends
 444 (of course most the different
 445 things) and their always most
 446 about (5.0) equal (.) ((laughs))
 447 there's not never (..) there's
 448 always someone trying to e:r to
 449 be the best and be the first and
 450 the: e:r but e:r not in such a
 451 competitive way e:rm (..)
 452 Alan: what about the teachers do they:=
 453 Fed: =no (.) no no no I don't think
 454 e:rm they: (2.0) feed this
 455 mechanism no not at all actually
 456 (.)
 457 Alan: h hm
 458 Fed: m: (3.0) e:rm well you
 459 would hope they don't I mean e:r
 460 in a: (..) up to a certain point is
 461 good but (.) e:r because yes when
 462 you work you have got to think
 463 you are the the best one for the
 464 job you have got to e:r you can't
 465 say oh no he's better just give the
 466 work to him I'll (.) I take the next
 467 one

468 Alan: h hm
469 Fed: but e:r e:rm (.) it's both
470 interpretation and translation it's
471 never only you so you have to be
472 able to work in a: group and e:r
473 and e:r (..) value also the other
474 people as you're as you're equals
475 it's (..) more as an equal but (...)
476 Alan: hm right (.) ok very interesting I
477 think we can stop there? Great

Maria 1. First interview:

- 1 Alan: ok (.) so: (.) Maria? Yeah
- 2 Maria: yeah
- 3 Alan: tell me (.) a little bit about (.)
- 4 what [you
- 5 Maria: [er::
- 6 ok so the chapters (.) the first one
- 7 is bingo it's from 6 years old to
- 8 10 years old it's the main thing
- 9 we were doing in the elementary
- 10 school so we were playing bingo
- 11 (.) and I know the English way of
- 12 saying numbers thanks to the
- 13 bingo so that's my kindergarden
- 14 then we have
- 15 Alan: b- b- but that made you (.)
- 16 e:njoy English
- 17 Maria: yeah yeah it was funny and it
- 18 was the only foreign language we
- 19 were studying (.) and it was a
- 20 funny way to do it so: (.) bingo
- 21 Alan: hmm did you get many bingos is
- 22 that why
- 23 Maria: m: no I didn't get one (.) but it
- 24 was funny and it was an
- 25 interesting way to develop (.) this
- 26 interest in a foreign language
- 27 Alan: hmm
- 28 Maria: and an::d we only did it with one
- 29 of the teacher the first one wasn't
- 30 really good she was starting with
- 31 the grammar which is not what
- 32 we should do in the elementary

33 school so: (.) I can't remember
 34 what we did with her but I do
 35 remember the bingo and I do
 36 remember enjoying it a lot so (.)
 37 that's the first experience of
 38 English I think (.) from 11 years
 39 old to 13 years old so: (.) during
 40 the media ((Italian for junior
 41 school))
 42 Alan: h hm
 43 Maria: I do remember Cirencester I went
 44 on a school trip every year
 45 during the summer for 2 weeks
 46 and we were staying in
 47 Cirencester so: (.) that was my
 48 idea of England it was (.) in the
 49 middle of the er land it was really
 50 green with a lot of people
 51 coming from all over the world
 52 but we were mainly speaking
 53 Italian with Italians and Spain
 54 and Spanish with the Spanish so
 55 it wasn't that useful but it was
 56 great (.) we went to London we
 57 went to Oxford so we saw a bit of
 58 England
 59 Alan: you said that was England what
 60 do you mean by that?
 61 Maria: yeah
 62 Alan: what do you mean by that?
 63 Maria: it it was what I was expecting I
 64 ha- I had seen the first movie of
 65 Harry Potter I think he had it had
 66 just come out and it was green

67 and my parents had travelled in
 68 England for a while with the
 69 motorbike and they told me
 70 about (.) the driving on the other
 71 side (.) and all these rabbits just
 72 walking and jumping next to the
 73 street next to the roads i:n (..)
 74 outside of the cities and all these
 75 really green and really (.) grassy
 76 areas so: I I was happy with that
 77 Alan: hmm
 78 Maria: a:nd it was my idea of England
 79 because the pasta was horrible so
 80 Alan: pa- sorry?
 81 Maria: pasta was horrible (.) pasta (.)
 82 spaghetti
 83 Alan: oh the food
 84 Maria: yea:h no just the pasta was
 85 horrible I had the best mushroom
 86 soup of my life I think but the
 87 pasta was horrible an- and
 88 everybody had told me that so
 89 that was my idea of England
 90 Alan: hmm
 91 Maria: and then during the first 4 years of
 92 high school (.) I I just called it
 93 adolescence (.) and I started watching
 94 movies in English reading books in
 95 English an:d er translating songs so
 96 while I was (singing) I always tried to
 97 make up the words of the songs which
 98 I couldn't understand and I made up a
 99 lot of words which I I was sure they
 100 existed and of course they didn't they

101 were just in my mind (.) like erm: (.)
102 the (lanes) I was sure they were called
103 courses because there is corsia in
104 Italian I was sure they were called
105 courses and when they said lanes (.)
106 no no it's not ((emphatic intonation)) (.)
107 anyway so that adolescence a:nd that's
108 when I read my first book in English
109 which is harry potter the third? I think
110 it's the third? (..) yeah (.) so I can't
111 remember much of it a:nd I started
112 learning something about er: english
113 literature but it
114 wasn't that interesting so 18 years
115 old is the year of into the wild I got
116 erm: really obsessed with the movie
117 and the book so I read the book
118 which is quite difficult I found it
119 really difficult at the per- at the
120 moment a:nd I became interested in
121 English and especially American
122 novelists and literature a:nd I
123 started to re:: to read a bit of the
124 English playwrights (.) a bit more of
125 the English playwrights and 19 years
126 old is the trip is the year of the trip
127 so (.) ah I wen- I was a lot into slang
128 imitation of and understanding of
129 different accents so I was trying to
130 challenge myself in understanding
131 where an English person a person
132 was speaking English was coming
133 from (.) a:nd I go- I got more and
134 more interested in the cultural

135 differences in and the people's
136 point of view in particularities so
137 not just from English this time so
138 but from all over the world so: I was
139 really interested in how (.) in way of
140 saying I think it's cultural bumps
141 let's call them bumps like we say:
142 we touch iron and you touch wood
143 and so I asked all the people what
144 they were doing for luck if they
145 were crossing the fingers or pushing
146 the thumbs or holding the thumbs or
147 all this way of doing (.) so: that was
148 really interesting and I tried to read
149 both the translation of a book and
150 the original version and I'm not
151 reading in this moment I'm not
152 reading an Italian book and that's
153 quite strange for me because I've
154 always read a lot and now I'm just
155 trying to read the English one (.)
156 because they're different from the
157 Italian version (.) and now that I'm
158 20 this is the blank page chapter I'm
159 studying something that I know
160 because I know something of
161 English but I'm no- I'm studying it
162 in different ways that I've never
163 done so that's what really interesting
164 about this year

165 Alan: hmm

166 Maria: so I'm studying (.) li:nguistics
167 I'm studying the: (.) phonetic
168 alphabets the humour and

169 something more specific about
 170 more than literature especially
 171 the American one because with
 172 whitsitt we are doing the
 173 American one
 174 Alan: hmm
 175 Maria: and so that's something I had
 176 never done and I haven't done by
 177 myself this year last year so
 178 that's a blank page
 179 Alan: right (.) and since you came to
 180 the faculty the university erm: (..)
 181 apart from this have there been
 182 what sort of experiences have
 183 you had in general that you
 184 didn't have before anything that
 185 was particularly striking? (.) or
 186 different for you?
 187 Maria: um:: (.) n:: yes but I just wanted
 188 to do this faculty I want to be
 189 part of something international in
 190 in my future so I think this is the
 191 best one that can prepare me for
 192 something which is out there
 193 Alan: hmm
 194 Maria: and I want to (understand) as
 195 many cultures as I can because
 196 they're so different from the
 197 Italian one the Italian one is
 198 really good I love it but it's old
 199 and is (.) is not likely to change
 200 in the next years so it will take a
 201 while and because we are in a
 202 different in a difficult situation

203 now we're trying to: (.) a lot of
 204 people go away and I wouldn-
 205 I'd love to go away but I would
 206 love to come back so: I'd love
 207 more to come back to Italy to
 208 work in Italy to work for my
 209 country and I think that for doing
 210 this the best I have to learn and
 211 understand more cultural things
 212 so: I'm going to study ru- I'm
 213 studying Russian and I'm
 214 probably gonna study Chinese (.)
 215 cos I think these are the biggest
 216 economies in the moment and
 217 they're developing really quickly
 218 and I want to understand what
 219 makes them develop so quickly
 220 of course the resources and
 221 everything but (.) what's the
 222 mentality behind it if I like it if I
 223 think it may help Italy or not (.)
 224 so: for all these reasons and just
 225 because I love languages and I
 226 love the:: the proposed me by
 227 this faculty I decided to come
 228 here I decided to try to come here
 229 and I got here (.) so that is my
 230 purpose
 231 Alan: you said that yo- you want to help
 232 Italy? Did I understand correctly?
 233 Maria: yeah I just don't want to go away
 234 and live away and live abroad
 235 and stay there and complain
 236 about how my country was

237 unable to support me (.) I don't
 238 wanna be a brain which leaves I
 239 wanna be a brain that leaves and
 240 comes back ((translates Italian
 241 phrase 'fuga dei cervelli', brain
 242 drain usually in English)) I
 243 wanna help Italy in this
 244 difficulties we're (..) we're
 245 having
 246 Alan: hm
 247 Maria: and I'd love to be able to say
 248 my opinion without being a-
 249 being prepared for it so I wanna
 250 be prepared for saying my
 251 opinion and I wanna say it if it
 252 really counts so I think (.) that
 253 going abroad and come back will
 254 open my mind
 255 Alan: I don't understand when you say
 256 say your opinion (.) I want to say
 257 my opinion and ?
 258 Maria: I wanna say my opinion if it (.) if
 259 it does have a real meaning not
 260 just to say it not just to say
 261 something then (.) I rethink I
 262 wanna say if it does mean
 263 something and if it really can
 264 help Italy or the situation I'm
 265 living or: everything else or: the
 266 work I'm doing or
 267 Alan: say it to who? so who are you
 268 talking to?
 269 Maria: ah: say it just (.)

270 Alan: you want to have your own
 271 opinion?
 272 Maria: yeah
 273 Alan: ahh right
 274 Maria: I want to have it I just don't want
 275 to erm:: to get it from from other
 276 people and make it mine
 277 Alan: hm
 278 Maria: I wanna listen to everybody and
 279 then say my opinion to
 280 everybody who wants to listen (.)
 281 w- if it really has meaning (.) and
 282 I think this faculty helps it helps
 283 me do this
 284 Alan: ((hesitant beginning)) w-w- so
 285 you opinion with regards to italy?
 286 or with regards to:?
 287 Maria: regards to problem of italy or
 288 regards to:?
 289 Alan: ah
 290 Maria: regarding the problems of italy
 291 Alan: and how do you see yourself as
 292 being part of I imagine you see
 293 yourself as being part of the
 294 solution
 295 Maria: I [I
 296 Alan: [how do you
 297 find yourself =
 298 Maria: =being an interpreter
 299 Alan: ah ha
 300 Maria: in si- in an economical and
 301 political situations so (.) I would
 302 like to be part of a team as being
 303 an interpreter so not just working

304 by myself going there and say
 305 yes he said a b c d f so I just want
 306 to be part of a t- be part of a team
 307 which collaborates to: (.) help
 308 italy so (.) I don't know what
 309 about er: embassies or: (.)
 310 working with some diplomatics
 311 who knows who know what they
 312 are doing and I can help them say
 313 it in the proper way in a different
 314 language
 315 Alan: hmm so you think one of the
 316 problems is (.) the interpretation
 317 of what they say?
 318 Maria: is the interpretation of what they
 319 say and maybe the preparation
 320 they're not prepared to say things
 321 properly so they might need (.)
 322 the development of the language
 323 of the foreign language just to
 324 start ah: a meeting so I think it's
 325 if a person abroad starts a
 326 meeting with a phrase with a
 327 sentence of that language and
 328 then of course he he goes on with
 329 his own language so: I think that
 330 as an interpreter you might (.)
 331 also suggest people what to how
 332 to say something so that there are
 333 no miscomprehension?
 334 Alan: hm misunderstanding
 335 Maria: misunderstanding and so that's
 336 something that really interests
 337 me more than translation

338 Alan: right so you if I understand
 339 correctly you want to facilitate
 340 communication
 341 Maria: Yes
 342 Alan: and in particular between your
 343 country and other countries
 344 Maria: yes
 345 Alan: cos you think there's a problem
 346 there (...)
 347 Maria: maybe not now because we don't
 348 have a political situation we just
 349 have an economical one but what
 350 about when berlusconi said oh
 351 yeah I'm so happy the new
 352 American president is tanned
 353 ((adopts a light hearted jovial
 354 tone))
 355 (..) jesus Christ you can't say that
 356 and somebody should have told
 357 you that it may be fun in Italian
 358 but it's not something that you
 359 can say as being president so (.)
 360 yes I would like t- (.) I mean I
 361 think I think that was something
 362 you can justify or whatever but=
 363 Alan: =so y- you think that was a
 364 problem of culture of not being
 365 able to understand
 366 Maria: of culture of not being able to to
 367 get into the others shoes you
 368 have to know it's a president it's
 369 something completely new it's a
 370 black president it's never have
 371 any history (.) so you can't say

372 that straight away you have to (.)
 373 you know you can say it during a
 374 dinner or during something else
 375 but not from Italy to America
 376 Alan: hmm
 377 Maria: just a way (.) and so I think that
 378 (.) an interpreter could have
 379 helped you him to say it in a
 380 different way
 381 Alan: hmm
 382 Maria: or just stopped him (...)
 383 Alan: Stopped him?
 384 Maria: no no I would have stopped him
 385 like (.) you're the president of a
 386 nation you can't shame me in
 387 this way
 388 Alan: hmm
 389 Maria: it's not fair (..) but (.) it's not
 390 something I can do and it's not
 391 something (..) anybody could
 392 have done because it was
 393 something he said straight away
 394 probably he didn't think about it
 395 (.) I hope=
 396 Alan: =so when in that situation if you
 397 were the interpreter for
 398 Berlusconi when he said that in
 399 Italian what would do?
 400 Maria: I would ask him er: are you sure
 401 is this something you want to say
 402 you want me to translate (.) in
 403 this way does do I have to
 404 translate it in a different way so it
 405 can be funny for the Americans

406 or: (.) what do you want me to do
 407 with this phrase
 408 Alan: hmm
 409 Maria: how? do should I have to be rude?
 410 Because y- because you have
 411 been rude so I have to was it rude
 412 was it just (banal) was it just
 413 something you didn't think about
 414 it how should I behave? This is
 415 something you said so (.) I don't
 416 wanna change it because it's not
 417 my (.) it's not my job to change it
 418 my job is the translated to make
 419 it understand by other people but
 420 what do you want me to do? (..)
 421 so (.) I probably would have
 422 asked him (.) before saying
 423 anything (..)
 424 Alan: and if he said no I want you to
 425 say what I said how would you
 426 feel about that?
 427 Maria: (..) ashamed (.) but I would have
 428 done it (...) ashamed because if I
 429 don't do it pro- anyway if I don't
 430 do it probably somebody else
 431 will do it in 30 seconds (.) so if
 432 asked me if he had asked me to
 433 do this I would have done it and I
 434 would feel ashamed because it's
 435 something I wouldn't have said
 436 and (.) something I don't think (.)
 437 correct
 438 Alan: hmm

439 Maria: a:nd I don't think it em I don't
440 think it goes on well with the
441 situation
442 Alan: hmm
443 Maria: but if he asked me that and if he
444 said yeah that's what I mean I
445 would have done it ((depressed
446 tone)) (..)
447 Alan: hmm because you say that you
448 know as an in- interpreter you
449 want to represent your country (.)
450 in a better way=
451 Maria: =yes
452 Alan: to the world (.) but if you are in a
453 situation where your country's
454 spokesmen the people who are
455 speaking the politicians and so
456 on are saying things that you are
457 (.) not happy with
458 Maria: I have to do it ((tone of
459 resignation))
460 Alan: right (.) so i- it goes against the
461 grain it goes against
462 Maria: it goes against the=
463 Alan: =the purpose
464 Maria: yes but it's my job a::nd (.) I I
465 cannot allow myself to change
466 what they are saying because (.)
467 I've got to do (politics) and not
468 translations not interpretation it's
469 no- it's not my job it's not my:
470 (...) my::: skills
471 Alan: hmm

472 Maria: they're not my skills I cannot do
 473 that
 474 Alan: but it sounds like you would like
 475 to sit down with these people=
 476 Maria: =I would like to sit down before
 477 (.) when probably people are
 478 understanding what they're going
 479 to talk about so that they can
 480 prepare themselves an- (...) ask
 481 and ask an: understand what they
 482 will
 483 say and the reason why they say
 484 that so I wanna go to a job
 485 prepared in an- and understand
 486 all the aspects of what they're
 487 talking about because I have to
 488 do it for my job (.) and because I
 489 want to know what they're
 490 talking about not just because I
 491 have to say it in that language
 492 Alan: hmm
 493 Maria: because it does interest me (.)
 494 and it does interest my family
 495 a:nd all the people I'm living
 496 with (..) so: (.) I will translate
 497 what they say what they say but I
 498 will have (.) a way of
 499 understanding and decide by
 500 myself if it's just something that
 501 (.) other people may not like or if
 502 it is something that is fair (.) but
 503 (.) not like but something I don't
 504 like at all all the same (.)
 505 Alan: [hmm

506 Maria: [so (.)
507 Alan: but it sounds like you you would
508 like to be: sort of a you'd like to
509 be in a position to help influence
510 people to: s- to communicate
511 with the outside world (.)=
512 Maria: in a [better way
513 Alan: [in a better way in a more
514 informed in a more culturally
515 informed (.) way So if I interpret
516 correctly you're not just an
517 interpreter you're also a cultural
518 me:diator
519 Maria: I wouldn't mind it
520 Alan: yeah (.) you'd like to me:diat
521 Maria: yes
522 Alan: on both sides (.) the cultural (.)
523 aspect as much as just the
524 translation word to word
525 Maria: yes
526 Alan: hmm
527 Maria: like er: talking about Chinese I
528 haven't done it yet but I know
529 something about the Chinese
530 cultures so (.) if you go to a
531 meeting and the Chinese person
532 is (snorting) next to you you
533 shouldn't find it rude because it's
534 not rude in asia coun- in asian
535 countries so I would I'd like to
536 advise people who are who are
537 not er: who doesn't know or
538 don't know much about asian

539 culture but not being offended by
 540 this
 541 Alan: hmm
 542 Maria: because it's something natural
 543 and if instead a Japanese I'd
 544 like to say to Japanese people
 545 who Italians were snorting inside
 546 a napkin so they were blowing
 547 nose they're not being rude (.)
 548 they're just doing what they have
 549 been taught to do
 550 Alan: h mm
 551 Maria: so: yes mediation (.) cultural
 552 mediation is something that
 553 would interest me a lot
 554 Alan: h mm (.) very good excellent I
 555 think we can stop there (.) I think
 556 (.) ok

Matteo 1: First interview

- 1 Matteo: well (.) er I had my first approach
2 with the m: languages in general with
3 with the English language cos here in
4 Italy er: English language is taught er:
5 since you you're a child
- 6 Alan: yeah
- 7 Matteo: and well I have been studying English
8 since I was a child and well er: I'm 25
9 and when I attended the the
10 elementary school er:m English
11 languages is er::m a language that a
12 language that is is imposed (.) oh well
13 it was imposed cos now you can
14 choose you can choose er: for example
15 English French Spanish but when I
16 was a child er: I could only choose
17 er:m English language and so well er: I
18 was forced ((laughs)) studying English
19 but er: it's er: a language that I love
20 I'm:: I'm not proficient but I have a lot
21 to learn but erm I love English
22 language cos er::m well I love for
23 example I love er:m (.) films video
24 games and video games in particular
25 and since I love a particular kind of
26 video games er:m they are called er:
27 role playing games
- 28 Alan: h hm
- 29 Matteo: and it's a kind of game where erm the
30 storyline is important is more
31 important for example than game play
32 (.) er::m well you have to

33 understand the storyline and er:m since
 34 this kind of games are not so common
 35 here in Italy er: they are only available
 36 in English language or in Japanese
 37 Alan: hm
 38 Matteo: and so since I was a child I: have been
 39 playing this games a:nd well I: (.) well
 40 it's my passion on- one of my
 41 passions=
 42 Alan: =could [I just
 43 Matteo: [one of my
 44 Hobbies
 45 Alan: could I just ask what type of games
 46 you play
 47 Matteo: er: role playing games is the the type of
 48 game I I love playing but er: well I play:
 49 a lot of games ((snorting laugh)) in
 50 general but now I don't have time [cos
 51 Alan: [any specific
 52 Any specific ones that particularly like
 53 or liked? still
 54 Matteo: well m:: final fantasy's one of the
 55 brands that it it's quite famous but now
 56 the this brand is er::m is translated in
 57 Italian but there are other games that
 58 are not translated in Italian (.) you're
 59 lucky if they're translated in English
 60 cos the original language is Japanese (.)
 61 and so I kept playing with this games
 62 in a in English language and so er:: i::
 63 I loved er: I loved yeah I: loved
 64 English language and well I decided to
 65 study er: to study English (.) and then
 66 Japanese cos I love Japan I love

67 japanese culture er:m even even
 68 though there are (.) m: I don't know if
 69 I can say contradictions?
 70 Alan: hm
 71 Matteo: yeah er: in this m: in that country er; i
 72 have been in japan (.) I went there i: I
 73 think 4 4 years ago er::m and well er::m
 74 I i loved this country I like that country I
 75 love japan in general er::m well i:: went
 76 to the univer- I I studied at the university
 77 of rome la spienza ((italian name of
 78 main university in rome)) I studied
 79 oriental languages and culture (.) cos
 80 er::m I always er: good marks at school
 81 but er: er:m (.) English language was my:
 82 favourite subject and I have the best
 83 marks a:nd well so I decided to to study
 84 oriental languages cos m: now I think
 85 that the er; English is er: a language that
 86 well it's easy to find a a person in the
 87 world that can barely speak er: speak
 88 English er::m ev- even even though well
 89 not so well but it's quite easy and so
 90 er::m i: since I had this passion for japan
 91 I decided to study er: japan Japanese too
 92 a:nd well at the university of rome la
 93 sapienza I studied English Japanese (.)
 94 Japanese and Korean a;nd I graduated
 95 last December (.) but since I want to
 96 become an interpreter in the future of
 97 course it's the: (.) it's (.) the: m: the fee:
 98 not the (xx) the job the job I like er: well
 99 i need er: er::m a particular training and
 100 er: so the the sslmit wh- what the sslmit

101 before well it's the: I think it's the: this
 102 this institution that can that can help me
 103 er:: (.) study to: to become an interpreter
 104 i:n in the future (.) i:: i: prefer
 105 interpreting (.) er: but (.) erm: (...) w-
 106 well I I like translation too but I like I
 107 prefer interpreting cos er: what
 108 fascinates me is the the: (.) is the the fi-
 109 figure of the interpreter cos er::m I think
 110 it's a::: a mediator a key between (.) not
 111 between two languages but two different
 112 cultures so if we have a for for example
 113 a Japanese person and I am an English
 114 person well they have different cultures
 115 different (worlds) different histories and
 116 and so and so I think it's a great a great
 117 field the the interpreting one and so: and
 118 now now here here I am this is my
 119 second bachelor degree and I hope I will
 120 be er: I will be able to get into the laurea
 121 magistrale ((specialization post-grad
 122 degree))
 123 Alan: right
 124 Matteo: yeah
 125 Alan: hmm
 126 Matteo: but I have to improve a lot cos er::m (.)
 127 since I have we- well my contact with
 128 the English language has m: has been
 129 written (.) and so he- well I understand
 130 er: English writing well well I have no
 131 problem I have no problem in
 132 translation but when it comes to
 133 speaking or listening well er:: i:: yeah
 134 I'm I'm not at ease (.)

135 Alan: hm hm can I just so you transferred
 136 from well you were living in rome=
 137 Matteo: =living in rome yeah
 138 Alan: and now you've moved to:
 139 Matteo: forli
 140 Alan: forli erm (..) what do you th- what
 141 were you're experiences of sslmit
 142 since you've been here? at the school
 143 in general
 144 Matteo: (.) well
 145 Alan: go- good and bad perhaps
 146 ((matteo laughs))
 147 Matteo: well er::m (...) in rome er:::m the:: the
 148 classes were overcrowded (.) so er::m
 149 in my: even in Japanese class well (.)
 150 o:ne (.) we we can think that Japanese
 151 is not a so a a language that is so: (.)
 152 that is popular (.) but er::m in rome er:
 153 Japanese classes but even Chinese
 154 classes Korean classes they were
 155 overcrowded you couldn't find a seat
 156 and sin- since there were a a lot of
 157 students in the er: in the rooms well
 158 you you don't have a direct contact
 159 with the with the professors
 160 Alan: h hm
 161 Matteo: er:m so I think here here at the sslmit
 162 you: can be: er: (.) follow I don't know
 163 if I can say I can use this (verb) but
 164 you can be followed by the by the
 165 professors
 166 Alan: hm m

167 Matteo: there's a: there's a contact and a and I
168 think that the subjects are more: er:
169 well the- there's more practice
170 Alan: h hm
171 Matteo: er::m and tha- that's that's what er: (...)
172 wh- what I i I find this amazing here at
173 the sslmit
174 Alan: h hm
175 Matteo: first of all then the quality of the: (.)
176 er::: of s- of the: of the teaching
177 Alan: hm m
178 Matteo: in general [here
179 Alan: [hm
180 Matteo: because I think it's high quality
181 Alan: hm m
182 Matteo: it's completely different for example in
183 in rome er well one of my friends
184 er::m studies
185 Matteo: er::m mediazione [culturale
186 Alan: [hm m
187 Matteo: in rome well th- the I I think the name
188 of the: bachelor degree is the is the
189 same but the level they they reach at
190 the end of the of their studies at the
191 end of the of the years (.) er::m is
192 completely different well wha- the the
193 level they reach at the end of their
194 studies is th- the level we need to get
195 into the into the sslmit
196 Alan: h hm
197 Matteo: and well i: I have a friend here at the
198 sslmit and he studies he's er:m he's
199 attending the second year courses em:
200 well (.) he: he told me about the sslmit

201 and the courses and well i: i: could see
 202 that the level was completely different
 203 Alan: h hm
 204 Matteo: and (.) that was that was amazing so I
 205 decided
 206 Alan: right (.) wh- just talking about perhaps
 207 the sort of class dynamics your
 208 colleagues and so on what sort of
 209 rapport do you ha:ve in among your
 210 colleagues
 211 Matteo: (..) well m: (.) even though I'm older
 212 than my my colleagues cos m: er:
 213 they're they're younger er: I'm 25 and
 214 they're I think 20 er: (.) yeah or 19 but
 215 er::m well (.) i don't feel the: this I
 216 don't feel any: any distance (.)
 217 between us er::m well you have er::m
 218 you have to study a lot so er::m (.)
 219 you can think that here at the sslmit
 220 you don't have the time to er: to: to
 221 make friends to:: to know other
 222 persons you can just chit-chat at m:
 223 dur- during the: during the: well the
 224 classes a:nd that's it but er: well erm:
 225 even though I'm older than my
 226 colleagues well they: (.) th-they're
 227 and i: feel that there's a competition (.)
 228 between us among us cos er::m when I:
 229 er::m (...) in rome there: there were so:
 230 many students er::m wh- what was
 231 important was the was was just to pass
 232 the exam get a bachelor degree and
 233 and that's it but here at the sslmit m:
 234 well you just don't have to study for

235 the classes oh w- well tha- that's my
 236 point of view cos I just try to: to do
 237 more (.) cos I feel that there's a lot of
 238 com- there's a great competition
 239 Alan: h hm
 240 Matteo: [and
 241 Alan: [well how is
 242 this manifested?
 243 Matteo: (.) well er::m: (..) you you can feel it
 244 by: can feel it m: how they: m: (..) how
 245 they: sp- how they (.) well I don't
 246 know em (..) during the the classes you:
 247 if you: for example when we are
 248 translating (.) er::m just translating or
 249 spea- or er: speaking in er in English
 250 er:m during our du- during the classes
 251 well I feel that em: one (.) tries to
 252 speak better than the other (.) tries to
 253 find th- the: mistakes done by by other
 254 students wants to show that he is better
 255 than the other a:nd but (.) m: jus- but I
 256 I think it's quite good cos er: (.) it
 257 helps you er: improve
 258 Alan: h hm
 259 Matteo: a:nd well and that's what I've noticed
 260 up till now i: I'm doing I'm trying to
 261 do my best cos er: I know that er::m
 262 you can study a lot but it's not enough
 263 Alan: h hm (.) is it all good then this
 264 competition you think?
 265 Matteo: (.) yeah I think it's good ye- yeah think that
 266 it's what er::m (..) it's what makes this
 267 university different
 268 Alan: hm ((surprised tone))

269 Matteo: cos er::m (..) well er::m (.) i: i: I
 270 haven't I haven't (found competition)
 271 at in rome and so (.) well you jus- you
 272 can you can study you can study well
 273 you can study (..) but (.) m: here in
 274 forli yo- you have to study: you you
 275 just have to reach a: a high level cos (.)
 276 yeah there's a lot of competition an-
 277 and it's good cos it's I think it's a good
 278 thing cos erm in the near future when
 279 we will (work) when we will work er:
 280 well I think that this kind of
 281 competition I I we will find this kind
 282 of competition even the: when we will
 283 try to: to: to find when we look for a
 284 wor- for a for work
 285 Alan: right I see and do the teachers have
 286 any influence upon this (..) aspect do
 287 they are they responsible in some way
 288 or: [not
 289 Matteo: [er::m
 290 (..) responsible for the com- for [the
 291 competition?
 292 Alan: [the com-
 293 competiveness
 294 Matteo: comp- contem- competiveness yeah
 295 er::m : (..) no I don't think so (..)
 296 fo::r (.) no no it's just (.) hm: (...) no I
 297 think I think that it's just er: the the
 298 kind of student that that studies at the
 299 sslmit cos ah (.) well i:n if you want to
 300 get in hm:: this university you: I think
 301 you: (...) you have to be a a good

302 student cos the the entry test I think is
303 quite high level
304 Alan: hm
305 Matteo: er::m:: and so (.) no no I don't think
306 that the professors erm do something
307 for (...) to increase this this this com-
308 com- competitiveness
309 Alan: h mm h mm (..) very good ok I think
310 we can stop there then

Rosa 1: First interview

- 1 Alan: so (.) rosa tell me a little bit about this
2 this book with regard to languages
3 Rosa: ((laughs)) erm: i don't know what should
4 i say about it? (.) i: started learning
5 english when i was about 6 i think? 6 7 i
6 don't know a::nd the::n i started
7 learning fre- french when i was about 12?
8 Alan: 12
9 Rosa: yeah i think because my father he used to
10 live in france and also in london so he
11 for him in was very important that we
12 learn lots of languages my sister lo-
13 didn't like learning languages but i really
14 loved learning languages so i first he
15 first he started like to teaching me but i
16 couldn't like (.) learn with him so:
17 ((small laugh))
18 Alan: hmm
19 Rosa: i couldn't studying it all with him so I
20 started going to oth- the classes myself
21 and i really like learning languages but
22 er: for example in school we had also
23 english and france french but in school i
24 don't know i didn't tend like to go to
25 classes i wasn't like the best student but
26 then i started watching series and english
27 series like friends and i think like that
28 part of the chapter for my english was
29 the best part
30 Alan: how old were you when that started?
31 Rosa: er:m about 14? No maybe older s- s-
32 sixteen or fifteen

33 Alan: hm

34 Rosa: i think my english improved mostly in
 35 that part cos i fell in love with friends i
 36 was like watching it like twen- twelve
 37 hours a day or something ((laughs))

38 Alan: wow

39 Rosa: ((laughs)) yeah waking and watching it
 40 and then going to sleep so: (.) i think that
 41 was like the bigger part of the chapter

42 Alan: right and wh- what happened after that
 43 then? So

44 Rosa: a:nd after that? erm: nothing special? I
 45 was like living my life and then i (.) hm
 46 decided to go i wanted to go out of iran
 47 like for lots of years but bu:t it was like
 48 hard so i had to first like graduate and
 49 then go graduate high school and then i
 50 go go out so so:

51 Alan: so i graduate from high school means
 52 you you finished your high school

53 Rosa: yeah i finish high school sorry ((small
 54 laugh))

55 Alan: er it's a different system so ok

56 Rosa: so: erm: i studied also for coming to italy
 57 we had to ha- to take a 2 exams we have
 58 to pass 2 really difficult exams language
 59 exams so i started also learning italian?
 60 So for about 1 year before coming to
 61 pass those two exams and also i really
 62 loved the language as it was also a bit
 63 like fra- french which i knew so it really
 64 helped me

65 Alan: cou- could you just tell me wh- what
66 were these exams again (.) to get into
67 school?
68 Rosa: to get into italy
69 Alan: to italy
70 Rosa: for the embassy
71 Alan: ah
72 Rosa: for the embassy right see we had to like
73 pass those exams
74 Alan: oh and why did you choose italy?
75 Rosa: e:::rm i liked the culture i have heard
76 that it's really like iranian culture bit
77 and actually there are some similarities (.)
78 a:nd i don't know i liked the country
79 because i i didn't want to go to a cold
80 country because also iran is not cold so i
81 wasn't i'm not used to cold weather
82 Alan: h hm
83 Rosa: a:nd also i wanted to go to a country
84 with seas so germany was out of
85 question
86 Alan: h hm
87 Rosa: ((small laugh))
88 Alan: warm sea at least
89 Rosa: ((small laugh)) yah ((both laugh))
90 Alan: ok so you came here did you have any
91 specific plans when you decided to come
92 here?
93 Rosa: nothing ((small laugh))
94 Alan: nothing?
95 Rosa: no nothing i just knew that i wanted to
96 come here and like continue my life like
97 i don't know (.) finding out what i'm
98 going to do here

99 Alan: right did you come alone or did you
 100 come with family?
 101 Rosa: ah: alone (.)
 102 Alan: hm? Was that an easy thing for you to do?
 103 Rosa: erm at first it wasn't but then i got used
 104 to it but it wasn't that hard
 105 Alan: h hm (2.0) and and your parents were
 106 happy with this?
 107 Rosa: erm: yeah they were happy they wanted
 108 me to be happy so (.)
 109 Alan: h hm ok so when you arrived here and
 110 you are here now in SSLMIT so what
 111 happened in between?
 112 Rosa: e::rm i arrived er last year and like at
 113 first we had to choose like one university
 114 in wh- what do we want to study a:nd so
 115 for the for the first year i i decided that i
 116 don't want to do anything i just want like
 117 to find out (.) find myself ou:t and like
 118 don't do anything really serious so i
 119 thought maybe if i go to a language
 120 course language university it'd be good
 121 and i had no idea like that Sslmit is like
 122 one of the best in Italy and like it's in
 123 forli i had no idea i mean like forli is a
 124 dead city and something like that so: i
 125 jus- had the idea to learn languages for
 126 one year and then choose what i want to
 127 do for the rest of my life so i decided to
 128 this city and this university (.) then i
 129 came here i saw the city and and so it
 130 wasn't like the best city wh- what i
 131 expected from europe it was also my
 132 first time out of iran not out of iran out

133 of asia so it wasn't what i hav- i
 134 expected so i chose that before doing the
 135 exam i just (.) like decided tha- that i
 136 want to go to another city and people
 137 told me rimini is so (.) i just went there
 138 were one year there and like not studying
 139 just like finding out myself? And then i
 140 thought about it and and i heard really
 141 good stuff about Sslmit and i saw like i
 142 really enjoy learning new languages so (.)
 143 i chose to come back here
 144 Alan: right so when you came to italy where
 145 were you living before you came to this
 146 part?
 147 Rosa: hm:: before: which [p-
 148 Alan: [did you did you
 149 come straight to forli: or [rimi-
 150 Rosa: [ah::
 151 at first I went to bologna but I wanted to
 152 come to f- to be honest it was like a
 153 misunderstanding because I heard it wer-
 154 i: her- I read that it's university of
 155 bologna so I though it's going to be in
 156 bologna so before coming I rent a room
 157 in bologna and I went there and I wanted
 158 to go there and they told me that ah the
 159 faculty is in forli
 160 Alan: hm
 161 Rosa: so I went there for three days and I had
 162 like already found like the flat and
 163 everything so I came back here I came to
 164 forli: I found another flat and then I went
 165 to rimini ((small laugh))
 166 Alan: go:d

167 ((Roxanne laughs))
 168 that's a that's a big mix up
 169 Rosa: yeah it was
 170 Alan: but you said when you came to italy y-
 171 you already wanted to study at Sslmit
 172 Rosa: er: yeah but I didn't know like that
 173 Sslmit is like only for interpreting and
 174 only like that I just wanted to improve
 175 my italian (..)
 176 Alan: right ok
 177 Rosa: and have fun ((Roxanne laughs))
 178 Alan: ok and let's talk a little bit about (.)
 179 perhaps the chapter of Sslmit so far
 180 Rosa: hm
 181 Alan: what sort of experiences have you had in
 182 the faculty since you've arrived
 183 Rosa: we:ll I find it a bit like difficult to
 184 translate from english to italian because
 185 none of them are my real languages bu::t
 186 e:rm I don't know I like it I I enjoy
 187 learning new languages I have took like
 188 for me it's like 5 different languages for
 189 people for everybody it's like 3
 190 languages but I also chose fre- french as
 191 an optional and also italian for me it's a
 192 new language so it's like 5 languages (xx)
 193 but I'm enjoying it I like
 194 Alan: yeah and what about your
 195 colleagues I mean what sort of (.)
 196 atmosphere is there in the classroom
 197 since you've arrived?
 198 Rosa: m::: I think it's good like (.)
 199 everybody is like (.) nerd like all the
 200 time studying it's like

201 Alan: ner:d
 202 Rosa: yeah ((laughs)) ((both laugh))
 203 Alan: what do you [mean by
 204 Rosa: [wasn't expecting
 205 that ((laughs))
 206 Alan: yeah?
 207 Rosa: yeah I I don't know I thought like it's a
 208 university here because also like last
 209 year in rimini it was really different and
 210 university because I also went to the
 211 university there but it was completely
 212 dif- different like the atmosphere
 213 everything
 214 Alan: how?
 215 Rosa: m::: everybody was thinking about
 216 partying not studying ((small laugh))
 217 Alan: yeah ((joins laughter))
 218 Rosa: and I was in a group of erasmus people
 219 [so: like
 220 Alan: [hm
 221 Rosa: everybody was like the goal was to have
 222 fun but to pass the exams and like learn
 223 stuff (..)
 224 Alan: and so what's different here n ner:ds you
 225 say I mean (.) d- you can you be more
 226 more precise?
 227 Rosa: e:rm everybody is like studies like (.)
 228 comes to the university till about 5 and
 229 then goes to study till (.) 12 or something
 230 everybody is like stud- like only
 231 studying (..) nothing else
 232 Alan: everybody?

233 Rosa: e:rm everybody that I have got to know
 234 recently like in this month yeah ((small
 235 laugh))
 236 Alan: wow and and in the classroom what what
 237 sort of (.) feeling do you have about you
 238 know the the (.) class when you're doing
 239 your lessons have you got any particular
 240 (..)
 241 Rosa: em:: (..) not I don't know like why I
 242 don't [understand
 243 Alan: [well
 244 you know you've all got different
 245 languages different teachers and so on
 246 any particular experiences you've had in
 247 the classroom that (.) em:
 248 Rosa: I like that the teachers are all like from
 249 different from the same country like their
 250 teaching also the language I really like
 251 that cos I I haven't I wasn't used to that
 252 for like of course like no person from
 253 america or from england would come to
 254 iran to teach
 255 Alan: hm
 256 Rosa: so for me it was really and like I saw for
 257 the german class classes like in germany
 258 and (..) I like that and also but I like also
 259 that there are different people like mother
 260 tongue that they have like different
 261 mother tongues and like e:r people from
 262 other countries I'm again in the erasmus
 263 group also here so I really like that also
 264 (...)
 265 Alan: hm

266 Rosa: also the erasmus people here are really
 267 different from here and rimini ((laughs))
 268 Alan: how?
 269 Rosa: for example in rimini they didn't know
 270 italian (.) nobody in the erasmus
 271 everybody was speaking in english or
 272 mostly also spanish because they were all
 273 from spain but here everybody knows
 274 english re- italian really good so
 275 Alan: hm
 276 Rosa: I it's like in (england) it's Sslmit so
 277 Alan: yeah and what about so the teaching
 278 styles in in the classroom erm is it
 279 different from your usual experiences?
 280 Rosa: e:::m:: a bit yeah like m: for example we
 281 usually like study one book in the class
 282 and usually study that book in the house
 283 but here like teachers don- (.) teach from
 284 a book
 285 Alan: hm m
 286 Rosa: they just like teach everything so then
 287 we have to like go to the book and study
 288 it (.) erm
 289 Alan: wh-which book?
 290 Rosa: for example e:rm they tell you like they
 291 teach in your in like in my country they
 292 usually teach from a book
 293 Alan: hm
 294 Rosa: and then we have to like read the book
 295 for th- the e- exam
 296 Alan: right
 297 Rosa: and the exam would only be from that
 298 book
 299 Alan: h hm

300 Rosa: but here like they tell you like you can
 301 also read those books but they like teach
 302 you like generally everything
 303 Alan: hm
 304 Rosa: hm (..)

305 Alan: so are we talking about books for
 306 grammar or or: just books in general I
 307 I'm not sure what books you mean

308 Rosa: for example e:r m: I don't know for
 309 example history (.) in the class of history
 310 that I used to have like they had like one
 311 history book

312 Alan: hm

313 Rosa: so they taught from that book and they
 314 had the exam from that book but here
 315 like the teacher is like teaches for from
 316 all the 9 er:m thousand ninety ((confused
 317 perhaps intending the 1900's)) and then
 318 we have to read like lots of books like to
 319 understand what it was exactly what
 320 happened in those years and stuff like
 321 that

322 Alan: right he gives you an outline and you
 323 have to [fill in the

324 Rosa: [yeah

325 Alan: middle bits ok yeah (.) and with regards
 326 to languages?

327 Rosa: the languages I think m: (..) m:: (...) it's
 328 kind of the same (it's like) only english
 329 which is difference like in germany in
 330 german class it's the same our teacher
 331 like teach us grammar and everything
 332 and then we study it and so but the
 333 english class like that we have like

334 different teachers that teach different
 335 stuff that I never had (xx) one is like for
 336 learning cul:ture another like boo:ks
 337 another like listening I never had it like
 338 classes like this much divided
 339 Alan: right (.) an- and for german for example
 340 do you the book to study or
 341 Rosa: no
 342 Alan: no ((small laugh)) hm
 343 Rosa: lecturers like just come and like tell us
 344 like about grammar different grammar
 345 parts and gives us papers (x)
 346 Alan: hm how do you feel about this style of
 347 teaching?
 348 Rosa: e::rm (.) I prefer with books ((laughs))
 349 (xx)
 350 Alan: why?
 351 Rosa: e:rm I don't know I it's like easier for
 352 me I am used to it I think maybe
 353 Alan: hm
 354 Rosa: I don't know (3.0)
 355 Alan: hm:: (...) why? ((both laugh)) let me
 356 illiterate the question why would you
 357 prefer books and not this style of
 358 teaching?
 359 Rosa: hm:: (.) f- for the german or for the
 360 english?
 361 Alan: whatever [in general
 362 Rosa: [because
 363 I I don't know but for english I actually
 364 prefer like this because like it's more fun
 365 but for german because I'm not that
 366 good at it it's like I don't know I think
 367 it's better because like now I have like a

368 million papers so it's like really hard to
 369 find them like when I want to study I
 370 don't even like want to look at those
 371 million papers but (.) I don't know with
 372 books like it's easier I know like which
 373 chapter like it's more organised but
 374 english I kind of know it and it's not that
 375 hard for me I I enjoy it like this it's much
 376 much more fun
 377 Alan: right but german b- because it's not one
 378 of the languages you studied at=
 379 Rosa: =no:
 380 Alan: then you w- would prefer
 381 Rosa: yeah pref- because I'm a beginner so for
 382 the beginners yeah I prefer to read books
 383 but then yeah of course I would prefer
 384 like to talk about topics and like read
 385 about you know
 386 Alan: hm what about the level is is the level ok?
 387 Rosa: hm here?
 388 Alan: f- for beginner german
 389 Rosa: mm:: it's not for beginners we have also
 390 more classes and we have to study
 391 ourselves because it wasn't for beginners
 392 but they told us it's going to be difficult
 393 but it is actually a bit difficult because
 394 I think everybody else's level is like B1
 395 but like we are like a group of 4 5 6 we
 396 are like A1 beginners so
 397 Alan: hm
 398 Rosa: it's kinda difficult and we have to study
 399 all ourselves but it's not bad
 400 Alan: right (.) so do you go home and study
 401 every evening too?

402 Rosa: em:: sometimes ((laughs)) but every
 403 evening I cannot do that
 404 Alan: you go to rimini to escape
 405 Rosa: ((laughing voice)) sometimes all- also
 406 that one in the weekends usually
 407 Alan: yes yes I can imagine weekends and em:
 408 and what do you do are you going you
 409 said you came here just to learn
 410 languages but have you changed your
 411 opinion now of what you want to do?
 412 Rosa: em: I'm thinking about becoming an
 413 interpreter e:r like there was the first
 414 time the idea came to me was from the
 415 movie 'interpreter' with nicole kiddman
 416 a:nd I don't know it's I like the I heard
 417 some bad stuff also about interpreting
 418 for example one of my friends she
 419 studied about 10 years to become a
 420 really good like interpreter and she was
 421 really successful but then like she tolds
 422 me that you cannot do like have an
 423 opinion yourself you just have to
 424 interpret so: she didn't like it but
 425 somethimes I don't know
 426 Alan: hm
 427 Rosa: I like the idea of like interpreting (.)
 428 Alan: so your friend didn't like it because she
 429 wasn't expressing her own [ideas
 430 Rosa: [yah
 431 she said like you it like she told me it's
 432 kinda like she was like a (crew) she
 433 wasn't like mm::
 434 she wasn't like (..) considered like her
 435 (proficient) like a really high level

436 proficient she told me when she was like
 437 interpreting like in politic ambient or
 438 something she was was always like
 439 respected as a crew not like somebody
 440 who has studied that much
 441 Alan: hm as a crew you mean as part of a team?
 442 Rosa: yah
 443 Alan: (.) hm and you don't mind that
 444 Rosa: mm:: I would prefer like to have like I
 445 don't know all my friends usually in iran
 446 they studied like engineering or some
 447 stuff like that I would prefer also like
 448 that but I also like interpreting I don't
 449 know
 450 Alan: hm: and what what sort of
 451 interpreting would you like to do? are
 452 you thinking of a particular career?
 453 Rosa: (.) mm: (...) I think that I thi- like I have
 454 no idea to be honest but like the thing
 455 that inspired me the most was the movie
 456 so UN but I think it's not possible so it's
 457 just like an idea an image
 458 Alan: why is it not possible?
 459 Rosa: er: because I'm not like mother tongue in
 460 any of the important languages so
 461 Alan: hm (3.0) m iranian is quite
 462 Rosa: ((laughs)) it's not that important in the
 463 world the language
 464 Alan: no (..) but there are political things at the
 465 [mo-
 466 Rosa: [yeah
 467 Alan: that require probably a lot of lots of
 468 interpreting
 469 ((both laugh))

470 Rosa: yah maybe?

471 Alan: hm (2.0) ok well we'll stop the interview

472 there that's great

Silvia 1: First interview

- 1 Alan: le- let's start from the beginning I mean
2 Silvia: yeah
3 Alan: what were your first memories or
4 experiences of language
5 Silvia: well actually (..) i::: i think that the first
6 chapter would talk about my elementary
7 school
8 Alan: hmm
9 Silvia: experience because I think that
10 something missed (.) in at that time in
11 fact we didn't have English lesson
12 Alan: hmm
13 Silvia: I was like looking for something because
14 all people all children especially they
15 have something some (passion) they
16 want to carry out you know (.) so: I don't
17 know there was something we missed (.)
18 that missed a:nd then college I start I
19 started studying English
20 Alan: college is sch- is school?
21 Silvia: scuola media ((Italian for junior school))
22 Alan: ahh because college for me is university
23 Silvia: ah ok
24 Alan: college y- yeah you mean junior school
25 perhaps
26 Silvia: junior school yeah
27 Alan: right
28 Silvia: (.) ok oh maybe i- it's a fren- French
29 (francesismo) ((possible influence from
30 Italian meaning language that has a
31 French origin)) I don't know

32 Alan: yeah
 33 Silvia: ok ((small laugh)) em: er: an:d well er:
 34 (.) then I st- studying English it was like
 35 basic really basic ((laughs))
 36 Alan: yeah
 37 Silvia: a:nd there was this friend of mine who
 38 always copied from me who cheated
 39 ((small laugh))
 40 Alan: yeah
 41 Silvia: during in this test he was like sarah how
 42 do you say io sono in English ((mimics
 43 whispering at exam)) I was like oh my
 44 god come on ((laughs)) junior school
 45 come on you can do it (.) a:nd then i: I
 46 had to choose where to go (.) wh- wh-
 47 which path I had to to take
 48 Alan: h hm
 49 Silvia: I was like ok so (..) high school what
 50 could I do ?
 51 Alan: yeah
 52 Silvia: I was like well maybe yeah language
 53 section I don't know I don't know if it-
 54 (..)
 55 Alan: is it liceo linguistico?
 56 Silvia: yeah exactly
 57 Alan: right
 58 Silvia: ah::: yes I I was pretty sure about it I
 59 never regretted it eh:m I st-
 60 studied English then French and Spanish
 61 Alan: a ha
 62 Silvia: and it got better and better ((small laugh))
 63 because I I I had found my true passion
 64 ((little laugh))
 65 Alan: yeah

66 Silvia: a:nd well

67 Alan: what was it you liked about languages? (.)

68 was it the teachers or was it the

69 experience in general?

70 Silvia: no:: bad experience with teachers

71 ((whispered voice followed by small

72 laugh)) yeah most of the time but I I also

73 hated English at some point because of

74 my teacher but then I (.) well my passion

75 called me so ((small laugh)) a:nd well (.)

76 I think that I liked changing because

77 lang- languages are always changing

78 Alan: h hm

79 Silvia: it's not (.) the same (..) a:nd I do like it I

80 i like when something (..) goes on and (..)

81 doesn't (.) stuck to get stuck to what it

82 was a:nd then that's that's why I would

83 like to become an interpreter

84 Alan: hmm

85 Silvia: a:nd well my fourth chapter would be

86 SSLMIT ((laughs)) I think

87 Alan: yes

88 Silvia: I think a:nd but it's just started so I don't

89 know I just like it I hope I (..) I could(n't)

90 say I'll be an interpreter one day ((small

91 laugh)) I I just say I hope I will

92 Alan: yeah

93 Silvia: for now because there are so many

94 people better (.) better than me ((small

95 laugh))

96 Alan: yeah?

97 Silvia: yeah much better bu:t I will do what I

98 can to become to fulfil my dream

99 anyway

100 Alan: right why do you say that people are
 101 better than you?
 102 Silvia: (.) well because I don't know but (.) I'm
 103 taking about ((small laugh))
 104 Alan: that's ok
 105 Silvia: ok I'm talking about fluency when you
 106 speak I'm talking about knowledge (.)
 107 grammar I don't know everything
 108 Alan: h hm
 109 Silvia: but since I I think I have this passion
 110 maybe (..) someday (.) I will
 111 Alan: h hm
 112 Silvia: I don't know bu- but I'm studying for it
 113 so ((laughs))
 114 Alan: yeah but still I don't understand why you
 115 feel that you- lots of people are better
 116 than you in the class
 117 Silvia: well I think my my brain tells me that
 118 because when you when you create a
 119 sort of competition well say well healthy
 120 one ((small laugh))
 121 Alan: h hm
 122 Silvia: (..) that's more li:ke you're you're trying
 123 to: to get better yourself
 124 Alan: h hm
 125 Silvia: because you know there are people like
 126 who are better than you well you get
 127 better you have to to pass them I don't
 128 know and so: I think I I always had this
 129 thing with the competition ((small laugh))
 130 I don't know
 131 Alan: h hm
 132 Silvia: it's my thing a:nd

133 Alan: just you or or also you're colleagues in
 134 you're class
 135 Silvia: well
 136 Alan: do you feel some are more competitive
 137 than others are
 138 Silvia: well I think that for now they keeping
 139 quiet ((laughs)) I mean (.) they're actual
 140 (.) (me) will come out once the (xxx)
 141 real exams will take (.) I don't know will
 142 take place
 143 Alan: h hm
 144 Silvia: because Sslmit is has always been a
 145 competition a place th- they told me that
 146 but I can kind of agree with them
 147 Alan: h hm
 148 Silvia: (.) so:: well I don't know I just like it I
 149 just like competition because it's a way
 150 to get better and better every day a:nd (.)
 151 if you if it's a healthy one as I said (.) I
 152 don't know why: why you should I don't
 153 know kick it apart you know ((laughs))
 154 Alan: yeah y- you say you feel this competition
 155 (.) where do you feel it? I I mean how
 156 does it show itself how do you see it?
 157 Silvia: erm: well sometimes when you: for
 158 example we just had mock tests
 159 Alan: h hm
 160 Silvia: a:nd ah I don't know h- how was it like?
 161 Alan: h hm
 162 Silvia: did you get a good note (.) a good mark?
 163 Alan: h hm
 164 Silvia: we- yeah I don't know which one? they
 165 always want to know (.) which mark did
 166 you get

167 Alan: h hm
 168 Silvia: did you get
 169 Alan: yeah yeah don't worry
 170 Silvia: a:nd so I don't know it's just a little (.)
 171 Alan: h hm
 172 Silvia: for show but
 173 Alan: you say they do you mean the whole
 174 class? or they
 175 Silvia: in general I I I'm not saying I don't like
 176 them er: th- the other guys and girls in
 177 this (.) school (.) I do like them but it's
 178 true there is this a little bit of
 179 competition and for now just a little bit I
 180 don't know
 181 Alan: h hm
 182 Silvia: in the future ((small laugh))
 183 Alan: yeah
 184 Silvia: bu- but I like it so it's cool for me
 185 Alan: right (.) and what about the teachers? in
 186 general not just english but all the
 187 teachers do you feel they create an a:ir
 188 that merits this competition or is it ?
 189 Silvia: m:: not qu:ite I mean the first day we were
 190 here (.) ah: in aula magna
 191 Alan: hm
 192 Silvia: they told us you're the best (.) because
 193 you just (.) entered the be:st school in
 194 italy for example I was like oh my god
 195 ((intake of breath with half laugh)) a lot
 196 of pressure but (..) it's not the teachers
 197 maybe it's the (..) w- we could say the
 198 background
 199 Alan: a ha but did you not know you were
 200 entering a very important institution?

201 Silvia: ye- yeah I know that's why I (.) chose it
 202 ((small laugh))
 203 Alan: a ha so what was the surprise? in in the
 204 aula magna (.) you said they told you
 205 this and wow
 206 Silvia: yeah because when they (.) tell you it's
 207 different from what you think
 208 Alan: h hm
 209 Silvia: when it's real when you have to face it
 210 it's re- really different ((small laugh))
 211 Alan: h hm
 212 Silvia: a::h I mean the outside world is n- not
 213 like (..) you imagine it you plan it so: (.)
 214 it can surprise you even if you know it (.)
 215 if you know the truth or whatever they
 216 say (..) it's surprising but it's for me it's
 217 a positive surprise because it's ok I i
 218 knew it so: (.) ok
 219 Alan: h hm
 220 Silvia: just facing it and trying to: (.) to handle it
 221 ((small laugh))
 222 Alan: right (.) and in the classrooms in the
 223 lessons after when you started your
 224 course
 225 Silvia: h hm
 226 Alan: what sort of atmosphere (...) was there? was
 227 it? [could you describe it
 228 Silvia: [ah:::
 229 (.) well I feel rea:lly comfortable ((small
 230 laugh))
 231 Alan: yeah
 232 Silvia: because I mean I was I attended S.I.D (.)
 233 political science (.) I didn't feel quite

234 comfortable ah because even if there
 235 wasn't that [competition
 236 Alan: [hm m
 237 Silvia: so much I mean (..) I I felt like I (wasn't)
 238 in the right place and now I feel like it so:
 239 Alan: hm m
 240 Silvia: (..) I did I don't bother about I don't
 241 know (.) I can't be bothered from I don't
 242 know by by I think ((small laugh))
 243 Alan: hm
 244 Silvia: what they (.) what they say: what how
 245 people react or (.) I don't know (.) hm: I
 246 just feel right here
 247 Alan: hm
 248 Silvia: so it's my my element I can I could say
 249 Alan: yes yes (.) so you don- in the the stu- the
 250 teachers (.) they don't put any pressure
 251 on you to: (..)
 252 Silvia: no: the teachers I don't think so
 253 Alan: h hm
 254 Silvia (.) I I do like my teachers ((laughs)) erm:
 255 (...) because they are so: (.) natural I
 256 don't know
 257 Alan: h hm
 258 Silvia: they feel comfortable too when speaking
 259 to the to our st- to us students
 260 Alan: h hm
 261 Silvia: so: (.) I feel like we are a family (2.0) I I
 262 know it's ((laughs)) (.) a little bit insane
 263 but ((laughs through last phrase))
 264 Alan: no wh- why is it insane?
 265 Silvia: I don't know it's just I do like I do like
 266 SSLMIT because I've been dreaming
 267 about entering this school (.) so long that

268 now it's like a dream came true so: (..)
 269 an- and it's- finding out that you feel
 270 comfortable actually here it's not that
 271 bad because people told me oh my gosh
 272 ((mimics people in awed voice)) you're
 273 entering er: oh: they are so: er they feel
 274 passion you have to study close yourself
 275 in the house in the house and study you
 276 can't go outside except for exams (.)
 277 something like that
 278 Alan: hm:
 279 Silvia: yeah they were very (..) er: st- strong
 280 words
 281 Alan: yeah
 282 Silvia: but I don't feel like ((small laugh)) I
 283 don't feel the same I mean it's different
 284 from what they said and I (.) I appreciate
 285 it
 286 Alan: yeah (.) right so erm: are there any
 287 negative aspects at all? Or ((Sara laughs))
 288 that makes you reflect in a sort of more
 289 questioning way (.) about your
 290 experiences here?
 291 Silvia: (.) well I think there are always negative
 292 aspects bu:t the positive ones (.) they are
 293 so much more ((small laugh)) that I
 294 don't (.) I can't really think about one
 295 now (.) about one negative (.)
 296 Alan: hm
 297 Silvia: (..) a: maybe yeah lot of (.) work to do
 298 ((small laugh)) but I think when you
 299 enter this school you know it's er you
 300 know it's not that surprising er:: well
 301 competition for some for some people it

302 is a bad thing (.) since for me it's not
 303 ((small laugh)) I I just change it into a
 304 positive one so: (.) it's ok
 305 Alan: do you know people who who aren't
 306 happy about this compe- this competitive
 307 aspect?
 308 Silvia: hmm yeah (.) there are some and they
 309 are: usually they are the (.) most shy
 310 ones
 311 Alan: hm m
 312 Silvia: because there are ah a surprising aspect
 313 just thought about it there are a lot
 314 people with erm: (.) ah (.) pronunciation
 315 (...) pr-
 316 Alan: problems?
 317 Silvia: problems yah me too I am one with the
 318 gl sound ((small laugh)) I was like oh my
 319 god school of language and all these
 320 people like me it was like it was
 321 surprising a a good thing cos you know
 322 sometimes you say ok I don't do this
 323 because I'm not erm: I don't fit in here I
 324 don't fit in here yah (.) bu:t then there
 325 are people who: try to fight (.) their
 326 nature to to fulfil their dreams so: (..) it's
 327 a I don't know it's something you: you
 328 can think about it all day because ((small
 329 laugh)) you know I don't know how to
 330 express it [it's just
 331 Alan: [yo- you say
 332 they fight their nature
 333 Silvia: yah
 334 Alan: wh- what do you mean by that?

335 Silvia: their nature mean what the nature gave
 336 them when they were born in this in this
 337 meaning in this way yah because you
 338 don't choose to speak (.) with a French 'r'
 339 or you can't pronounce pronounce the
 340 'gl' sound so stuff like that
 341 Alan: h hm
 342 Silvia: you just have it yo- you can't I don't
 343 know erm: (..) correct it
 344 Alan: h hm
 345 Silvia: bu:t you didn't choose it so: (.) trying to
 346 correct it by doing something in which it
 347 is very important all that stuff it's I I
 348 found it I find it like erm: (..) symbol of
 349 strength? A demonstration of strength?
 350 Alan: h hm
 351 Silvia: I don't know
 352 Alan: it's like a struggle
 353 Silvia: a struggle yeah
 354 Alan: a struggle [with
 355 Silvia: [but
 356 Alan: no?
 357 Silvia: (.) struggle yeah but most more interior
 358 that than exterior
 359 Alan: h hm (.) i- it's a struggle what you said
 360 it's a struggle if I understand correctly
 361 with sounds in the different languages (.)
 362 are there other struggles or is it jus- is it
 363 pronunciation only that
 364 Silvia: oh no there are other a lot of stru- kind of
 365 struggle but I'm speaking about this one
 366 but there are a lot there are people I
 367 don't know who can speak fluently
 368 ((intake of breath)) (.) now I can speak a

369 little a little bit more fluently that I used
 370 to because I went to london
 371 Alan: h hm
 372 Silvia: when I ha:d this er: exam I mean I don't
 373 know to how you call it because you
 374 don't have it but like oral exam eh: in
 375 high school (.) I was always anxious and
 376 (..) I ((breathes out)) I don't know I I
 377 didn't even try to speak properly I felt
 378 really uncon- uncomf- uncomfortable
 379 Alan: h hm
 380 Silvia: bu:t now yeah I have problems ((little
 381 laugh)) because I lost more most most of
 382 what I learned there well er: speaking
 383 well I'm trying to (.) recollect it ((little
 384 laugh))
 385 Alan: h hm right so you have problems in oral
 386 exams in school
 387 Silvia: yeah
 388 Alan: so you haven't done your oral exams
 389 here yet?
 390 Silvia: no ((little laugh))
 391 Alan: so are you worried about those?
 392 Silvia: yeah ((little laugh)) but (.) because I I
 393 haven't spoken (.) not ah English for so
 394 I'm not even sure if I am using the right
 395 verbs I think I'm not but ((little laugh))
 396 I'm just trying to speak because it's just
 397 what it's all about I don't know (.) I will
 398 be an interpreter so I have to get used to:
 399 (.) to to speak
 400 Alan: h hm
 401 Silvia: and so I am trying to do it
 402 Alan: h hm

403 Silvia: just trying (.)

404 Alan: yes do you think as an interpreter you

405 have to to struggle to be an interpreter?

406 Silvia: struggle?

407 Alan: with your wi- with what you have you're

408 talking about fighting against the things

409 that you=

410 Silvia: =yeah

411 Alan: things you don't naturally have you have

412 to work on them

413 Silvia: yeah I have to work on them more than a

414 struggle yah to work on it

415 Alan: a ha

416 Silvia: (.) i: I have I have got a lot of work to do

417 but (.) I'm just the beginning so: I: think

418 I mig- may ((stuttered laugh)) I may I

419 may reach it

420 Alan: what sort of qualities do you think

421 an interpreter has? (.)

422 Silvia: well first of all (...) he should like it

423 ((small laugh))

424 Alan: of course

425 Silvia: (..) m- I I know it's like ((small laugh))

426 obvious I I'm (captain) obvious in this

427 but (.) y- you have to you must I can say

428 you must

429 Alan: a ha

430 Silvia: bec- because if you don't you can't you

431 can't be a good one I mean

432 Alan: yeah

433 Silvia: a:::nd then (.) you have to work a lot on

434 your pronunciation your fluency your

435 skills in general

436 Alan: h hm

437 Silvia: a:nd you have to to go abroad where the
 438 language you study is (.) spoken a:nd
 439 that's topical ((small laugh)) as topical
 440 matter a:nd then you have to ((small
 441 laugh)) (..)I don't know if you say it (..
 442 to:: (draw) yourself in
 443 Alan: to draw yourself in?
 444 Silvia: [(throw)
 445 Alan: [o:h
 446 to thro:w yourself in ah right
 447 Silvia: ok (.) yeah throw
 448 Alan: I thought you said draw yourself in
 449 Silvia: ((small laugh)) ok
 450 Alan: right so you imagine it as being
 451 something like a swimming pool or a sea:
 452 or:
 453 Silvia: yeah more like you're falling from a
 454 rock (.) into the sea yah something like
 455 that or (.) i- better into the fire
 456 (...) ((laugh))
 457 Alan: that sounds a little dangerous
 458 Silvia: n- n- no: I like flames (laughing voice))
 459 I'm not ((laugh)) (..) piromane ((Italian
 460 for pyromaniac)) but er: it's just my
 461 element so I feel more comfortable
 462 talking about fire than
 463 Alan: a ha
 464 Silvia: than water I don't really like water so
 465 Alan: hm
 466 Silvia: yeah throw yourself into f- flames
 467 Alan: [right
 468 Silvia: [it's better
 469 Alan: and what happens in the flames?
 470 Silvia: (..) well it's really hot

471 Alan: yeah
472 Silvia: but if you can handle it (.) you rock (.) so
473 ((small laugh)) that's clear
474 Alan: yeah
475 Silvia: yeah
476 Alan: an- and if you throw yourself into flames
477 you can also get burnt can't you?
478 Silvia: yeah sometimes you will (.) certainly
479 you will
480 Alan: hm
481 Silvia: but y- you will anyway I mean
482 interpreter or not in life always I think
483 bu:t if you ca:n (.) I don't know er: (..)
484 get passed (n-) this (...) you can do
485 whatever you want I mean if you can
486 throw yourself into flames what can you
487 do? (.) everything
488 Alan: hm
489 Silvia: so: (..) I mean it's a strong imagine
490 strong yeah ((small laugh)) but yeah it it
491 is for me
492 Alan: hm m
493 Silvia: but it's cool ((laughs))
494 Alan: or it's hot
495 Silvia: it's hot ((laughs))
496 Alan: ok (.) that's great then

Group 1: First group interview

- 1 Alan: so jus- just to kick the ball jus just to get
2 the ball rolling just tell me a little bit
3 about your experiences here in the first
4 (..)
- 5 Fed: who are you talking to?
6 ((general laughter))
- 7 Alan: in the first (.) in the first year
- 8 Fed: good really (.) it's nothing really less or
9 more than what I expected it's (xx) of
10 tests a lot it requires a lot (.) erm:
11 teachers are teachers well (in that
12 respect) no I'm really (xxx) I don't need
13 to you don't need to expect to have a (..)
14 different relationship to teachers (xx)
15 and in other circumstances it's self (xx)
16 most of them know your names because
17 classes are 30 people so they know your
18 name but it doesn't need to be anything
19 else I didn't expect it to be anything else
20 it's erm (..) more or less normal really
21 (...)
- 22 Alan: hm (.) so how would you define
23 normality? I mean what does normality
24 mean? (.) if it's normal what does
25 normal [mean?
- 26 Fed: [no no
27 I mean I'm saying it's just not really
28 different than any other erm:: (.) faculty
29 or circumstances academics in general
30 it's (.) quite (..) you know (.) normal (.)
31 considering the others and erm that's it
32 so a lot of people erm: believe that since

33 this is a small school and of course we
 34 are divided into smaller groups and even
 35 then even smaller groups it should be
 36 more of like in a high school or
 37 something and thank god it's not (xxx) (.)
 38 it shouldn't be it's a university it
 39 shouldn't be a high school so
 40 Alan: hm (.) anybody else want t- I don't want
 41 to say now you speak ((general laughter))
 42 you speak anybody who feels they have
 43 something to say just say it I mean it's
 44 not a question of (.) you know
 45 Maria: erm I'm quite happy about the first
 46 semester but I'm happier about the
 47 second ((federico laughs)) because I
 48 really didn't like the lectures about
 49 translation we (.) any- anybody could
 50 have done it so:: we were just (.) looking
 51 for some different terms but it was just
 52 one term missing or (.) in a whole text
 53 so:: I thought it would have been done in
 54 a different way I thought it could be
 55 done in a better way definitely (.) while
 56 I'm really happy about the erm: the
 57 active translation (.) beca:use is way:
 58 more difficult a::nd it opens your mind
 59 because you have to think in another
 60 language and you have to think it (.) you
 61 have to think naturally so you don't have
 62 to pretend like you were thinking you
 63 have to do it (.) so: that's (.) translation
 64 is the only thing I wasn't happy about it
 65 Alan: translation from which language to
 66 which?

67 Maria: from English
68 Alan: to:?
69 Maria: Italian from (.) yeah from English to
70 Italian
71 Fed: to me that's also because the teachers
72 were Italian ((laugh)) and er: no it's eh: I
73 think it's different it's different when
74 you go into a class and the teacher starts
75 talking in English and you are studying
76 English I think it's it puts you mo:re (.)
77 you feel more like you are already doing
78 something
79 Maria: yeah definitely but also I mean it's all
80 right if they are Italian because you are
81 translating towards Italian and they're
82 real translators so they aren't just doing
83 articles they are doing book and
84 everything so: they have to know Italian
85 really well and that's perfect but (.) it
86 just didn't work for me and I guess that
87 when we saw the marks for the exam
88 ((laughter from others)) yeah the (xxx)
89 vota di media ((Italian for average mark))
90 was 23 for a translators school that's
91 really low ((noise from outside drowns
92 out voices))
93 Alan: it's just unbelievable isn't it? But you
94 said you were agreeing what did you say
95 about translation?
96 Matteo: because in the first semester I'm well I
97 don't like the I don't like the way the
98 teachers er erm er (taught) the subject
99 because erm I think when you translate
100 something you: you just (.) need er::

101 guidelines and well the course was just
 102 well (.) that's the text just translate it oh
 103 how have you translate how have you
 104 translated this part? Oh well and you and
 105 you and you and stop ((laughter))
 106 Maria: ha ha it wasn't even like that it was how
 107 did you translate it? Er: like this (..) er
 108 what about somebody else?
 109 Matteo: yeah
 110 Maria: It wasn't even yes or no or you could
 111 [improve it
 112 Silvia: [or try to be more precise
 113 Maria: (xx) somebody else (..) what?
 114 Alan: try to be more precise?
 115 Silvia: yeah something like that or just general
 116 [advices
 117 Fed: [xxxxx
 118 You never had [a
 119 Silvia: [ok
 120 Fed: direct
 121 Silvia: no but [I
 122 Fed: [yes
 123 Silvia: with all of the them the second term is
 124 definitely better because the teachers are
 125 (.) I don't know if that's the fact is that
 126 the active translation so they're more
 127 active but I don't know ((laughs)) but
 128 they're like yo yo you feel like your
 129 mind is: (..) activating itself ((laughs) ye
 130 ye you feel you think a lot a::: you feel
 131 like a: (xxx) coming down to you I don't
 132 know it's very interesting the first one
 133 was like I don't know you know the

134 animals when they sleep all the time
 135 [(xxx)
 136 Alan: [hibernate
 137 Silvia: what?
 138 Alan: to hibernate
 139 Silvia: yes it's something I like I love the first
 140 term because it's small ok ((small
 141 laugh)) so I I really liked it but I prefer
 142 this one (.) it's way better
 143 Alan: just one thing what does active mean?
 144 Silvia: (...) err: I mean that you participate
 145 Alan: hm
 146 Silvia: in the lesson you: (.) you have to have
 147 an open minded an open mind and (.)
 148 you can you can talk to the teachers they
 149 actually tell you yes or not or you should
 150 do this thing you shouldn't do this one
 151 Alan: mm
 152 Silvia: [erm
 153 Alan: [they give you feed back
 154 Silvia: [yes
 155 Alan: [basically
 156 Silvia: like it's both ways you participate you:
 157 you are free to say whatever you think
 158 it's not that you weren't free before but
 159 you feel free now (.) it's they motivate
 160 you I don't know if [you can say that
 161 Alan: [yeah
 162 Silvia: and they call you to go to the: desk and
 163 so you you have the whole class in front
 164 of you and you're forced to do what will
 165 doing a few years I hope ((Laughs)) so I
 166 it's:
 167 Alan: hmm

168 Silvia: it's more it's closer to what we are going
 169 to do in the future
 170 Alan: hmm
 171 Silvia: it's closer to:: erm:: to the (.) world of
 172 the of the o::f the work (.) to the job I
 173 don't know
 174 Alan: how does it feel to do it in front of the
 175 class?
 176 Silvia: well i::: (.) didn't do I haven't done it yet
 177 but there are people who already
 178 ((laughter, looks at maria)) just
 179 Alan: ((directs gaze at Maria)) how does it feel?
 180 Maria: it's good
 181 Alan: yeah
 182 Maria: it's real an::d I was funny cos I was too
 183 short and I sat on the chair where
 184 everyone else had seated (.) had been
 185 seated ((pronounces each word slowly))
 186 I my feet couldn't reach the ground so
 187 the first thing I did was to (.) lower the
 188 chair like so that I could touch the
 189 ground and then I could start and then I
 190 put the chair back up again so nobody
 191 could have noticed ((alan laughs)) but it
 192 was just nice it was (..) erm:: emotional
 193 because (.) it's not just you and two
 194 people so you know that the other people
 195 do and say about what you're saying so
 196 (.) if you make (any) mistakes they
 197 understand and they say maybe they say
 198 ahh well I might have said it in another
 199 way (.) or as soon as you talk other
 200 things come up through your mind and

201 you say oh: (that) was (the) word but
 202 that's fine an::d it's just (.) good
 203 Alan: hm
 204 Maria: it feels good
 205 Alan: what's the general feeling in the
 206 classroom do you think I mean what sort
 207 of atmosphere do you get from your
 208 colleagues? is th- is there a lot of support
 209 there?
 210 Silvia: Ah:: there's competition but there's also
 211 support (.) yes (.) they tell you in a calm
 212 way it's not the wa:y it's this way
 213 ((imitates another student whispering
 214 with a condescending tone)) ((laughter))
 215 or they might say ((makes sound with
 216 lips suggesting a brush-off remark)) that
 217 was that was wrong (.) you can't say it
 218 that wa:y (.) but it's: there's a happy
 219 atmosphere
 220 Maria: relaxed
 221 Silvia: [relaxed yeah
 222 Alan: [yeah everybody
 223 feels that?
 224 Alan: is it [is it relaxed
 225 Rosa: [(yeah I think so)
 226 Alan: yeah?
 227 Silvia: excited also [we are all
 228 Alan: [hmm
 229 Silvia: motivated as I said
 230 Alan: yeah
 231 Silvia: an:d (2.0) I don't know what to say
 232 ((small laugh))
 233 ((Researcher looks at Federico))

234 Fed: yes I told you that I feel a a weird ah::
 235 degree of competition (and) er erm high
 236 self esteem (.) and the:n (..) again it's
 237 it's not for me I'm not judging anyone (.)
 238 erm: I just sometimes feel it's (.) weird
 239 it's it's nothing I do so I don't really
 240 understand it (.) bu:: m:: (..) yes it feels a
 241 little bit exaggerated and it's most times
 242 (.) justified it's people who really know
 243 what they are saying but you always
 244 have a way to of sometimes you just
 245 don't really need to say it ((small laugh))
 246 to to show that you (.) knew better and:
 247 a:: there's always a:: (.) a way to say
 248 and not to say as a in a mocking or a:: (.)
 249 presumptuous way (.) and it's not that
 250 the general thing they're not saying
 251 you're a just a bag of (3.0) not quite
 252 ((laughter)) eh: no it's (good) people
 253 and it's very there's a good thing yes
 254 and (xxx) exciting erm:: it's (.) erm
 255 (don't know) maybe you don't speak of
 256 this at [the beginning
 257 Silvia: [well
 258 the: there is competition but it's all about
 259 how you feel about it (.) how you take it
 260 because I do I really feel close to the
 261 others (.) there are people who I like
 262 more than others but I I'm happy with
 263 the atmosphere with the people because
 264 before entering here they told me oh
 265 sslmit oh my god no you don't have to
 266 do that ((whispered awed voice)) well I
 267 like it oh competition too much

268 competition ((repeated whispered awed
 269 voice)) but I I don't feel that way I I'm
 270 very happy to be here and so: (.) yes
 271 there is competition but it's all about
 272 how you take it so (.) it's not if you
 273 don't take it as a personal thing you
 274 you're happy with it
 275 Alan: how does everybody else feel about
 276 competition? The same or different?
 277 Rosa: Yeah kinda the same (..) there is
 278 competition but it's not a bad
 279 competition I think (.) cos like
 280 everybody helps each other it's not like I
 281 don't know I think it's good (..)
 282 Alan: Matteo (..)
 283 Matteo: well I:: I think that competitiveness erm:
 284 helps you improve (.) because well I
 285 think the sslmit prepares you er: to:: to
 286 do work that you will meet after the
 287 university
 288 Alan: hmm
 289 Matteo: and so:: (...) you: here at the sslmit
 290 you're trained (.) and I think it's a:: a
 291 good thing (.) but I just don't like the
 292 the atmosphere in the classroom so
 293 much cos you:: are always I or at least I
 294 think you're quite always judged by the
 295 others cos mm:: not not not everyone not
 296 not all the students in the in the
 297 classroom but (.) well you always meet
 298 someone who who thinks he's better
 299 than you or: or so and but (.) it's not er::
 300 I think it's not a good thing but it helps

301 me improve (.) and so I just take the the
 302 good things out of it (.)
 303 Alan: hmm (.) but there a:re negative things
 304 then
 305 Matteo: ye:s bu: m::
 306 Alan: you disagree (..) ((silvia appears a little
 307 unsure about my statement))
 308 Silvia: well no not quite (.) I think we all agree
 309 it's different f- for him maybe because I
 310 know that erm in the german class
 311 there's more competition or
 312 competitiveness I don't know how to say
 313 it erm than in the other languages of
 314 course English ((small laugh)) but
 315 English is more relaxed german class
 316 because I have er:: my er flatmate has a
 317 first language german and she: tells me a
 318 lot of things and they they really are
 319 very I don't know how to say it in
 320 English but erm:: (.) they are more
 321 precise or pignoli ((Italian)) I don't
 322 know er: [they feel
 323 Alan: [fussy perhaps
 324 Silvia: yeah they feel the competition they feel
 325 they are god ((a little laughter)) and so
 326 [they
 327 Alan: [that's interesting they feel
 328 like they're god
 329 Silvia: yeah (.) they are they think they are
 330 ((laughs)) they're not but er:: I don't
 331 know why bu: I I heard a lot about
 332 german class [I don't know if
 333 Maria: [xxxxxxx
 334 Matteo: [it depends on the fir::

335 on the first language
 336 Silvia: yeah
 337 Matteo: because yes er::m I found that erm: er::
 338 the students who have for example
 339 german as first language (.) well they: I
 340 think that (.) they think they are better
 341 than the than the other ((federico laughs))
 342 students cos well german is a difficult
 343 [language an::d
 344 Silvia: [yeah exactly
 345 Matteo: the English language is the the easy one
 346 the language that all all the world know
 347 (.) knows and so
 348 Silvia: you know Spanish is similar to Italian
 349 ((adopts a sing-song tone)) French Oh
 350 French come on ((adopts tone suggesting
 351 it's not to be taken very seriously)) you
 352 just end the sentence with something
 353 like yeah:: or I don't know ((small
 354 laugh)) and that's fren:ch so: german
 355 german that's different that's the way of
 356 thinking but I don't really care about it
 357 because I don't (.) I don't have german
 358 ((little laugh)) ((others laugh)) as my
 359 language so I I have a lot of (..) I don't
 360 know of friends but not very friend but
 361 in the german class so
 362 Alan: there's nobody here who has german as
 363 they're second language?
 364 Matteo [(xx)
 365 Rosa: [(us two)
 366 Matteo: we have (.)
 367 we have german as a [second language

368 Rosa: [as second
 369 language but not the first
 370 Alan: and do you feel the same the same thing
 371 that german the german students have
 372 this attitude?
 373 Matteo: no I think that it's just an attitude of the
 374 students who have er:: german as first
 375 language
 376 Alan: just first language?
 377 Matteo: yes (.) just first language cos you they I
 378 think they think well erm:: to get in the
 379 sslmit you have to know to you have to
 380 know the german really well for
 381 example when I:: I:: did an exam last
 382 last no December no last January er:: I
 383 met a girl and she:: she I think she has
 384 german as first language and we were
 385 just talking about the erasmus
 386 programme (.) an:d well em:: I:: I
 387 applied for the erasmus programme and
 388 I have chosen erm: a german a german
 389 city to study there and well and this this
 390 girl just said well erm: you it doesn't
 391 matter well the city doesn't matter for
 392 students of who has (.) for students who
 393 have german as second language cos you
 394 just have to learn german (..) e: but we
 395 er:m but we need to go to universities
 396 like Heidelberg and mannsheim and
 397 they're quite prestigious they are like the
 398 ssmlit in germany
 399 Alan: ah ha
 400 Matteo: and (..) and I think it's it's not true cos I
 401 think that the level of of of german

402 taught in the: in the class of first
 403 language and second languages I think
 404 it's quite the same (.) and for example
 405 we have erm:: the the teacher who erm::
 406 who::
 407 Rosa: (xxxxx)
 408 ((whispers inaudibly to matteo))
 409 Matteo: yes the teacher of the of the second
 410 language class is valentine moscato and
 411 it's one and I think she is one of the best
 412 interpreters in the (.) in italy as least
 413 [I think cos she
 414 Rosa: [well that's
 415 what she presented herself as ((general
 416 laughter))
 417 Matteo: yes
 418 Rosa: we don't know if it's true or not ((matteo
 419 and Roxanne laugh))
 420 Matteo: but she works for
 421 ((Roxanne continues to laugh))
 422 er presidente del consiglio ((Italian
 423 prime minister))
 424 Fed: parli german ((italian for 'speak
 425 german')) ((general laughter))
 426 Matteo: yes
 427 Silvia: I told you german people think they're
 428 god ((more general laughter))
 429 Matteo: ye:s
 430 Silvia: as an interpreter
 431 Alan: so do you think that she might be selling
 432 herself a bit?
 433 Rosa: ya:::: (.) she's good but not that good
 434 ((laughter))
 435 Rosa: because the first thing when

436 [she came was
 437 Matteo:[(no she's good)
 438 Rosa: she was telling about herself about half
 439 an hour that she told that ya I'm like one
 440 in the like ten people in all Italy that can
 441 do that do does interpreting for as
 442 English and german not like er:: not
 443 Italian but English to german and
 444 german to English which there were two
 445 teachers there and the other one also said
 446 that I have doubts if there are only ten
 447 people to do that and she just ignored the
 448 other but (.) I think she's good but not
 449 that good ((general laughter))
 450 Alan: any other languages? What are you're
 451 second languages again?
 452 Fed: russian
 453 Maria: russian
 454 Alan: what experiences have you had there? (.)
 455 Fed: well she's good [so
 456 Maria: [yeah
 457 Fed: for others it's a bit [different
 458 Maria: [er:: (.)
 459 it's an amazing language and I think it
 460 was great the way it was presented
 461 ((fillipo laughs)) and the first semester
 462 was quite good but not good enough for
 463 what they are expecting from us (.)
 464 because if we have to reach an
 465 interpreter level for the third year (.)
 466 we're wa:y late and we've done a lot
 467 like we didn't stop for a moment (.) we
 468 we hadn't time to catch our breath but
 469 it's not enough (.) an::d (.) this year I

470 think it was the first year that we only
 471 had forty hours of grammar instead of
 472 sixty and so: sh- she was really good but
 473 I think that if we had had the boscolo
 474 from the first semester we would be half
 475 of it
 476 Fed: I don't think [(xx)
 477 Maria: [half the number
 478 yeah because she is really strict we're
 479 going this way so you're doing 25
 480 exercise for next week (.) that's it (.) ok?
 481 So you have to come here and you have
 482 to know everything you've done (..) up
 483 to yesterday (.) so:: (.) it's great it's a
 484 great language and it's really to do it
 485 and you have to focus a lot but it comes
 486 natural after a while
 487 Alan: hmm
 488 Maria: but we should have started earlier and (.)
 489 in a stronger way (.) so:
 490 Alan: hmm
 491 Maria: it's good I'm happy with what we did
 492 but (.) we should have started with
 493 boscolo
 494 Alan: and you federico do you agree?
 495 Fed: yeah more or less I am not actually quite
 496 that happy with the first semester teacher
 497 but I I'm not saying she's not good erm::
 498 maybe because I'm not a first class
 499 student so it's not mine to judge
 500 ((laughs)) I mean I know I'm I'm::
 501 saying I did surely didn't but the all:: the
 502 (.) effort I put otherwise I would be: you
 503 know

504 Alan: hmm
 505 Fed: better (.) but I still think if I've got it
 506 right she wasn't even supposed to be the
 507 first semester teacher [and I
 508 Maria: [I have that idea
 509 Fed: and she's she seems like she would
 510 really be a good teacher if you already
 511 knew Russian a bit and we started fr-
 512 from the wrong level and it's:: she
 513 seemed a bit erm: you know [confused
 514 Maria: [confusing yeah
 515 Fed: confused and confusing [er::
 516 Maria: [confusing
 517 Fed: she: wasn't really sure why you should
 518 know and what you erm: should focus
 519 on [an::
 520 Maria: [she
 521 was always saying]oh you're going to
 522 do this with [boscolo so:
 523 Fed: [yes I know I'm [jus-
 524 Maria: [I really can't
 525 answer this question I'm not sure what
 526 you're asking it doesn't really matter
 527 inside this programme ok but (.) like I'm
 528 asking because I want to understand so if
 529 there is a method or if it's just random
 530 Fed: yes I mean the most used sentence was
 531 just learn it by heart and [I ((laughs))
 532 Maria: [yes
 533 Fed: I mean [it's just
 534 Maria: [it's like this (xx)
 535 Fed: learn everything you need to sometimes
 536 just (.) rules and
 537 Alan: yeah

538 Fed: and you know the rule and then you
 539 know the (how to do it) and I know
 540 we're not (.) elementary school so it's
 541 not we're not just supposed to have the
 542 rules so you do this and this and this
 543 Alan: hmm
 544 Maria: [and it doesn't matter if
 545 Fed: [you have to (xx)
 546 Maria: you write er.: on the blackboard on the
 547 whiteboard with the black or the red
 548 pencil it does-
 549 [doesn't matter
 550 Fed: [or the blue
 551 Maria: or the blue [yeah
 552 Fed: [or the blue
 553 Maria: it doesn't matter I mean just write
 554 whatever you want to write down so like
 555 Fed: (xxx)
 556 Alan: I don't understand what you mean by
 557 Fed: She she was most focused on the colour
 558 of the pen than was how clear she was
 559 writing on the blackboard on the
 560 whiteboard
 561 Alan: uh hu
 562 Fed: so she [(xxx)
 563 Maria: [so she would start
 564 writing down I don't know ah:
 565 something (.) and then she would say oh
 566 maybe I should write it in black so she
 567 just wipe it over and then and start again
 568 Fed: she should [focus that time
 569 Maria: [xxx
 570 Fed: on writing clearly and making sure we
 571 understood and got it right

572 rather than (((laughs))
 573 Maria: [right an:d
 574 Fed: than making sure it was colour coded
 575 and ((laughs))
 576 Maria: I think she is a she is a very sweet
 577 person=
 578 Fed: =yes of course
 579 Maria: she certainly would be great for the high
 580 school or for preparation where we
 581 would have more time (.) but (.) in this
 582 type of school I think that you have to be
 583 strict I mean what you're going to do is
 584 not easy so we don- we're not going to
 585 have a teacher or a man who takes your
 586 hand if your if we're scared (.) she
 587 always did that she always asked if we
 588 had questions so if someone was asking
 589 something about an exercise she would
 590 spend the whole lesson explaining to
 591 him again what he or she hadn't
 592 understood which is fine but you should
 593 you were supposed to do it during the
 594 ricevimento ((Italian for office hours))
 595 because we have t- we have a strict
 596 programme and we have to follow it (.)
 597 and (.) I'm sorry to say it because I don't
 598 want to seem a hm: I don't know selfish
 599 but it's not my problem if you don't
 600 understand [you have some timetables
 601 Fed: [(xxx)
 602 Maria: when you can go and speak directly to
 603 the teacher but if it's not another class
 604 problem just say it in another moment

605 Fed: another thing she should have I mean
606 I'm not complaining that she explained
607 things twice or three times but
608 sometimes it took me the fourth of fifth
609 time to understand ((maria laughs)) I
610 think she if she:: erm:: if she did that
611 and she gave the same time to explain
612 the new thing it would have been fine

613 Alan: hmm

614 Fed: but if you have to reduce the time to
615 explain the new part and most likely
616 more complicated part because it's after
617 erm: and to reduce you have to tighten
618 that part to explain over and over
619 something else

620 Alan: hmm

621 Fed: that doesn't work then it's probably er: I
622 mean it's (.) was useful for me because
623 she was repeating so but then again she
624 wasn't (.) explaining quite with all the
625 time she needed the next thing so it's er
626 you know a chain of erm:

627 Alan: ah (.) this thing about workload I mean
628 general wh ((fillipo snorts a small laugh))
629 (...)
630 What are your [(.) comments about
631 workload

632 Silvia: [I do I don't think
633 anyway I don't think she's selfish
634 thinking that way because it's a group
635 work so you can't spend all of your time
636 on one person

637 Alan: hmm

638 Silvia: there are receiving hours for that sh-
 639 she's right I think an::d about the (.)
 640 ((sniffs and laughs)) workload well I
 641 don't think it's (.) that much if you can
 642 organise yourself if you can I don't
 643 know if you say ok today I do this and
 644 then say I'll do this well sometimes you
 645 you have mm: you need more time to
 646 understand one language rather than
 647 another
 648 Alan: hmm
 649 Silvia: bu:t the thing is that you (xx) I don't
 650 know you waste a lot of ti:me for
 651 example he commute
 652 Commutes ((looks at fillipo)) and that's
 653 a way of wasting time so there are lots of
 654 ((Roxanne whispers something)) oh I am
 655 just saying ok (xx) ok sorry ah: I'm
 656 saying that there's not only sslmit we
 657 have whole life ok? ((small laughter))
 658 there are plenty of thing we can do and
 659 sometimes we just have to rest to I don't
 660 know to go and have fu:n because there
 661 are a lot of [pressure on us
 662 Fed: [or to work
 663 Silvia: what?
 664 Fed: or to work
 665 Silvia: or to work (xxx) and so:: sometimes yes
 666 it's too much and it depends er: but I
 667 don't think it's different from one
 668 language and another but how well you
 669 know that language (.) because I mean
 670 even Spanish can be (.) difficult if you

671 don't have a clue of what the language is
 672 what the culture is
 673 Alan: hmm
 674 Silvia: so you have to to work on each language
 675 (.) an::d well I'm talking as a Chinese
 676 second language so I'm saying (.) and
 677 the thing is also the the teachers it
 678 depends on the teachers I think that our
 679 teacher is too: erm: well how can I say it
 680 is not that strict (.) she should be a
 681 chinese I mean sometimes we have to
 682 know and she's confusing she's
 683 confused li- like they say an::d if you if
 684 you have no clue on your saying just
 685 don't say it just skip it
 686 Alan: hmm
 687 Silvia: because your confusing your students
 688 and we have to learn a new language we
 689 don't know what we are dealing with so
 690 I don't know if you are understanding
 691 what I am saying (.) so:: what do you
 692 think?
 693 ((laughter))
 694 Matteo: well I think that the workload m: (.)
 695 doesn't matter so much cos I think here
 696 at sslmit you have to do even more (.)
 697 cos yes you: m:: you you have a
 698 homework bu- but hm: it depends on the
 699 on the language but you have to study
 700 even more than home than (.) you study
 701 here cos (..) for example i: i:: started
 702 learning german as a beginner and well I
 703 spent er: the whole weekend writing a::
 704 a glossary an:d (.) I don't think I don't

705 think it's a waste of time but well i:: I
 706 would have preferred to have spent my
 707 time learning er:: (.) the new (xx) the
 708 new german grammar or or a something
 709 else so you have you have a heavy
 710 workload here at the sslmit but I think
 711 you have to do even more to improve
 712 your language proficiency er:: for
 713 example the your speaking skills your
 714 erm: your accuracy when you speak cos
 715 for example I'm I just do many
 716 mistakes when I: when speaking English
 717 (.) german (.) well I started studying as a
 718 beginner so: it's (.) it's a mess and I
 719 hope I will go [to:
 720 Alan: [why
 721 it a mess?
 722 Matteo: what?
 723 Alan: why is it a mess?
 724 Matteo: (3.0) er::: well cos I think that at the end of
 725 the of the:: of the university at the end of the
 726 sslmit i: I just have to speak (2.0) per-
 727 perfectly (.) er but I have to speak a perfect
 728 language (.) first language and second
 729 language cos we won't I think we won't
 730 become to become interpreters or translators
 731 and so em: (.) I:: I want to become an
 732 interpreter and I think that you just need a
 733 proficiency that is (.) eh quite amazing one
 734 near to a mother tongue level
 735 Alan: is that everybody's point of view?
 736 Silvia: yeah (.) and I think that we should have
 737 er: started with me- mediation (..) (xxx)
 738 ((talks in low voice to Roxanne) in

739 English I mean in English ok everybody
 740 knows it (..) I don't know why we didn't
 741 I I we we lost a whole term not speaking
 742 English and now (.) well I I don't I must
 743 say I'm surprised because we can speak
 744 it (.) fluently more or less depends on the
 745 people
 746 Alan: hmm
 747 Silvia: bu::t (.) I I think we should have started
 748 er- earlier (.)
 749 Alan: hmm
 750 Silvia: erm:
 751 Alan: what do you think about this whole idea
 752 about being perfect in a language?
 753 Maria: (.) it does have at least the grammar (.)
 754 Alan: hm: wh what do we mean by perfect?
 755 Maria: I mean that I can perfectly understand
 756 and perfectly speak even with (.) couple
 757 of mistakes that's fine but I have to be
 758 able to perfectly understand whatever
 759 they're saying not in a specific erm:: (.)
 760 situation I don't pretend I don't erm: I
 761 don't think yeah I don't expect I will be
 762 able to know and to understand a
 763 medical situation (.) with er: a specific
 764 terms and words
 765 Alan: hmm
 766 Maria: but I wanna be able to perfectly
 767 understand (.) everything another people
 768 another person in another languages is
 769 saying in another language and (.) I I
 770 prefer not to feel my Italian accent when
 771 I am speaking in English or when I am
 772 speaking in Russian (.) because (.) it

[illegible]

807 Fed: yes if I can tell it of course but I don't
 808 expect to er: reach a level o:f a speak er:
 809 spoken Russian (..) as the one of I er:
 810 expect to of understanding er: level I
 811 don- I don- I don't expect it and I erm:
 812 (..) and I don't quite think that I even
 813 should erm: if I'm to become a mediator
 814 probably between Russian and English
 815 or Italian yes of course yes that's when
 816 you have to but as an interpreter I don't
 817 think what (.) that's required to
 818 Silvia: hmm [I don't know
 819 Maria: [probably not if you're working at
 820 the U.N but I think you have to start
 821 somewhere lower so:: like if you were
 822 working for a company they're just
 823 going to hire one person they have to
 824 save money so they're not gonna hire
 825 three person because (.) if you can speak
 826 Russian I suppose you can be an
 827 interpreter from and to Russian
 828 Alan: h hm
 829 Silvia: so
 830 Alan: hm
 831 Maria: I don't wanna have an Italian accent
 832 when I'm speaking Russian a:nd I wan- I
 833 wanna speak it perfectly
 834 Alan: hm so how do you feel at this moment
 835 about you:r your future lives as potential
 836 interpreters? Are you feeling positive
 837 about the (.) developments (..)
 838 Silvia: ((small laugh))
 839 Rosa: I think my case is probably completely
 840 different from the others er: [but

841 Alan: [why?
842 Rosa: that's if I can ever become an interpreter
843 because [I:m
844 Alan: [why?
845 (xxxx) ((speech overlap with other
846 participants))
847 Rosa: none of the languages are my mother
848 tongue so I think I I mean I don't even
849 know if Persian would be useful so I'm
850 concentrating on Italian English like
851 everybody else but I don't think I can
852 ever become like a mother tongue
853 somebody with mother tongue so (..) a
854 bit negative ((laughs))
855 Alan: yeah
856 Rosa: yeah ((laughs))
857 Alan: wh-why is it negative is it to do just you?
858 [o:r
859 Rosa: [yeah I just
860 Alan: the institution?
861 Rosa: no no just me becau- I don't know em: I
862 (.) but I'm looking at the others because
863 I see that it's like to become like a
864 mother tongue it's kinda impossible so:
865 sometimes I have a few doubts
866 Alan: hm but when you came to the university
867 did you think it was possible?
868 Rosa: yeah I thought like that there would be
869 lots of like foreign students also an::d
870 but I don't see any foreign students so: (.)
871 also
872 ((Rosa laughs))
873 Silvia: because you're in forli
874 ((alan and Rosa laugh))

875 Alan: forli? What do you mean by you're in
 876 forli?
 877 Silvia: I mean that ((laughs)) well if you were
 878 in bologna there are a lot more a lot well
 879 (.) erm: of course erm: well as she says
 880 her case it's different a little bit but if
 881 you go I don't know to erasmus oh (.)
 882 how you can say andare in erasmus?
 883 I've never understand that ((asks for
 884 translation from Italian to English))
 885 Alan: to go on a erasmus (.) to go
 886 [on erasmus?
 887 Silvia: [to go
 888 Alan: [on erasmus?=
 889 Silvia: =on erasmus
 890 Ok (.) if you go on erasmus (.) you:: well for
 891 example your first language English and
 892 you go to Exeter for example
 893 ((fillipo laughs))
 894 Silvia: we- (xxx) ((laughs)) erm:: you you
 895 speak to English people or foreigner o:r
 896 erasmus students you improve a lot in
 897 speaking terms and because for example
 898 I I've been to London (.) and: before
 899 going I (.) I didn't know how to speak in
 900 English I had I had no clue (.) I I'm not
 901 saying I I have a clue now but I I think
 902 I'm I'm more flu- fluent now than I was
 903 before
 904 Alan: hm m
 905 Silvia: so you can improve you can be an
 906 interpreter there are a lot of interpreters
 907 who if it w- was impossible well (.) you
 908 wouldn't be here there wouldn't be a

909 school for interpreters (.) but ah: for
 910 example er: (.) for me i: i:: started here (.)
 911 thinking I want to be an interpreter and
 912 now I find myself (.) thinking well I I
 913 don't want to be an interpreter I want to
 914 work and I don't know in the er: tra:-
 915 tra:- travelling tourism sector things like
 916 that so I changed my mind there are a lot
 917 of things er: coming I don't know
 918 happening [this way
 919 Alan: [so you don't
 920 Want to be an interpreter?
 921 Silvia: we::ll not necessarily
 922 Maria: that's good
 923 ((general laughter))
 924 uno in meno per la magistrale ((says in
 925 Italian one less person for the postgrad
 926 degree))
 927 ((general laughter))
 928 Silvia: [well i
 929 Alan: [is that
 930 The competition again?
 931 ((more laughter))
 932 Maria: yah a little bit [i
 933 Alan: [are are you are you
 934 already thinking about
 935 Maria: [ah
 936 Alan: [magistrale?
 937 Silvia: [I think there are special
 938 places for Chinese (.) I don't [think
 939 Fed: [ah ha
 940 ((general laughter))
 941 Maria: my third language is Chinese
 942 ((overlap of voices with laughter))

943 Fed: Russian English and Chinese you want
 944 to take all of our jobs
 945 Silvia: well don't worry [anyway because I I
 946 think
 947 Maria: [(xxxxx)
 948 Silvia: I'll try I think I'll try when I want to do
 949 the master [er:
 950 Maria: [go for it
 951 Silvia: so thank you for your support I know
 952 what your thinking
 953 ((loud laughter))
 954 Maria: no it's really good
 955 Silvia: I know you're doing it for my well yes (.)
 956 Alan: so this competition thing seems to have
 957 [come up again
 958 Silvia: [no::
 959 I do like her I love her she's so amusing
 960 (.) no no re- really I I don't feel that
 961 competition because sh- I mean (.) she
 962 will take will take the place ((laughter))
 963 (..) I'm not worried i just I'm just happy
 964 because I've tried three times to enter
 965 here and now that I am here I don't care
 966 about anything anyone I just want to
 967 have friends do what I can do and then
 968 the future is from the last just wait for us
 969 so what we'll do I don't know will be ok
 970 Alan: yah (..) so a future interpreter?
 971 Silvia: I don't know we'll see I'm I'm not tense
 972 to any more I was no I er: was ten I think
 973 (.) I want to be an interpreter an
 974 interpreter an interpreter ((adopts fast
 975 insistent child-like voice)) and then can

976 you change ((general laughter)) my mind
977 oh come on and yes
978 Alan: but why? I still don't understand why
979 exactly you changed your mind? (..)
980 Silvia: I don't know (.) because I've been
981 working the tourism sector area for for:
982 (.) seven years
983 Alan: ah ha
984 Silvia: and I really like it (.) I mean
985 Alan: but isn't that interpreting? (..)
986 Silvia: well yes (.) mediator or I don't know but
987 just being at a desk maybe (.) if you can
988 change but ah: the receptionist I don't
989 know you you can speak a lot of
990 languages I think that will be fine in a
991 hotel in a restaurant whatever it is then
992 offer you the possibility to speak to
993 speak it frequently (.)
994 Alan: so that's a mediator?
995 Silvia: yeah
996 Alan: if I understand correctly and [it's
997 different
998 Silvia: [oh yeah
999 Alan: from an interpreter so how how do you
1000 interpret (.) being an interpreter
1001 Silvia: we- [we:ll
1002 Alan: [what's the difference?
1003 Silvia: I don't know ((small laugh)) no what I
1004 meant was that more than mediator or
1005 you just have to speak the mother the
1006 language that the person in front of you
1007 speaks (.) he's mother tongues you don't
1008 have even to interpret because you have

1009 to speak to him or to her so it's fine with
 1010 me ((laughs))
 1011 Alan: hm
 1012 Silvia: you don't have to be I I mean I cou-
 1013 hmm make (wars) break out all over the
 1014 world because I'm not a patient person
 1015 or a pacific one so it's ok with me
 1016 Alan: yeah
 1017 Silvia: it's ok with the world I think ((laughter))
 1018 it's better for the world
 1019 Alan: wh- wh- how do you understand the
 1020 concept of being an interpreter
 1021 everybody? (1.0)
 1022 Fed: she seems to want to ((indicates maria))
 1023 Alan: yes ((general laughter)) maria seems to
 1024 know what it means what does it mean
 1025 for you maria?
 1026 Maria: what does it mean? (.) it means I'm able
 1027 to:: (.) to get in touch with people from
 1028 all over the world because with the lang-
 1029 with the languages I have chosen erm: (.)
 1030 I'm (.) I'm taking in a lot a great part of
 1031 the world
 1032 ((fillipo laughs))
 1033 Alan: hm
 1034 Maria: so:: (.) it's really a:nd an interpreter also
 1035 means for me that I'm able to understand
 1036 their culture because if I have to know
 1037 what the ground hog's day is ((general
 1038 laughter)) I have to know really where
 1039 has it come from why is it why: (.) is
 1040 there a ground hog's day
 1041 Alan: h hm
 1042 Maria: and ((laughs))

1043 Silvia: because infanti says so ((small laughter))
 1044 Maria: and so it means understand the way of
 1045 thinking of a people with a different type
 1046 from mine
 1047 so: Chinese how how do they think?
 1048 they probably think with images because
 1049 the ideograms are the characters are (.)
 1050 im- images they're [no-
 1051 Silvia: [they're concepts
 1052 Maria: yeah they're not letters they're not
 1053 words (.) and that's amazing [that's
 1054 Silvia: [that's more
 1055 attractive than our language is
 1056 Alan: hmm
 1057 Maria: no=
 1058 Silvia: =not more attractive=
 1059 Maria: = no: I just (.) I love my mother tongue
 1060 Italian is is a beautiful [language
 1061 Silvia: [I'm not
 1062 so sure of that
 1063 Maria: I know I know so I love my mother
 1064 tongue I love Italian and I love to
 1065 understand and get to know different
 1066 languages and cultures so:: being an
 1067 interpreter for me means to be able to let
 1068 the other people know what's on the
 1069 other side
 1070 Alan: h hm
 1071 Maria: an:d (.) I think this is amazing
 1072 Alan: right
 1073 Maria: so
 1074 Alan: but just let me bring it back again to the
 1075 institution and to your education here (.)
 1076 what experiences have you had here that

1077 have led you to (.) desire to be
1078 interpreters or not to be interpreters have
1079 you had positive you said you've lost
1080 ((alan looks at Roxanne))
1081 Rosa: ((laughs)) a bit yes but I don't think it
1082 was from the institute I think because
1083 like it was more like ((participants
1084 whisper)) seeing other peoples and like
1085 seeing like I thought because like mostly
1086 concentrating on people who are more
1087 like who have mother tongue English so:
1088 Alan: ah ha
1089 Rosa: ah for someone who is not is really
1090 difficult to become like that like for the
1091 words and like I don't know it's kinda
1092 difficult (xx) I don't know ((laughs))
1093 Alan: hm:
1094 Rosa: but I [i
1095 Alan: [so you feel like you have to be a
1096 mother a native speaker [in one of the
1097 languages
1098 Rosa: [yeah because
1099 Yeah like because they have like the
1100 mo:d- the moda da dire they say like this
1101 stuff like that ((uses Italian word for
1102 colloquial expressions)) I [don't=
1103 Alan: [yeah
1104 Rosa: =know like I could ever like know all
1105 the expressions all the thi:ngs like (.) so:
1106 Alan: that's interesting isn't it the fact that you
1107 you have to be a native speaker you feel
1108 in one language in order to be a
1109 successful interpreter (.) within the
1110 institution they expect you (.) if I

1111 understand correctly? They expect you
 1112 to be:
 1113 Rosa: yeah
 1114 Alan: a native speaker ((rosa laughs)) in one of
 1115 the languages
 1116 Silvia: but I think you can be I mean for
 1117 example
 1118 Alan: well she says no
 1119 Silvia: yeah I do think it's possible because for
 1120 example professor rutland he speaks
 1121 Italian better than us
 1122 Maria: yeah
 1123 Silvia: better than I than better than we do (.)
 1124 that's like a native speaker so: (.) I
 1125 mean
 1126 Alan: yes
 1127 Silvia: em: it it the the fact that you're a mother
 1128 ton- that your mother tongue is Italian
 1129 doesn't mean that you know Italian that
 1130 well
 1131 Alan: h hm
 1132 Silvia: I don't know Italian that well ((small
 1133 laugh)) so: I think it's possible because
 1134 you're studying it we: sp- we: overlook
 1135 (.) erm: (.) often er the fact that erm:
 1136 things that other people don't because
 1137 they're studying it so they want to know
 1138 it we we overlook it because it's our:
 1139 mother tongue so you're not we don't
 1140 need to know that
 1141 Alan: can I just ask you when you said that he
 1142 knows your language better than you (.)
 1143 can you give me a specific episode
 1144 where

1145 Silvia: well first lesson he was [using
 1146 Fed: [but did we have one?
 1147 Silvia: yeah ((both laugh)) (.) well the only
 1148 lesson sorry (..) ok the fir- the only
 1149 and first lesson we had with him a:: he
 1150 was speaking and we're like oh my::
 1151 [go:d ((tone of amazement))
 1152 Maria: [he said
 1153 something like [erm:
 1154 Silvia: [em:: (.) u:: ((Italian
 1155 pronunciation of letter))
 1156 Maria: utilizzando in quest' er:: utilizzando in un
 1157 determinato contesto per poter rendere
 1158 tali ((Italian phrase))
 1159 Silvia: hm ye- yeah
 1160 ((Fillipo laughs))
 1161 Maria: which was something like I
 1162 Silvia: phew ((sound associated with something
 1163 that impresses))
 1164 Marai: I understand I never use (.) I use tizio e
 1165 cosa e:: ((Lower register Italian words))
 1166 Silvia: exactly
 1167 ((general laughter))
 1168 he he speaks in a proper way
 1169 Maria: yeah
 1170 Silvia: as it should be (.) for a- an interpreter it
 1171 should be that way but we don't
 1172 Maria: and he's a
 1173 [translator
 1174 Fed: [why don't you think
 1175 we talk we talk better I mean I hope I
 1176 talk better than the: and and I hope
 1177 (xxxxxxxxxxx) a normal er: you know
 1178 er::: (.) m: a builder from erm:: (..)

1179 Silvia: I'm not at [exeter
 1180 Fed: [exeter
 1181 I hope I have a better English than a m:
 1182 with a more norma:l grammar
 1183 Silvia: (well i)
 1184 Fed: than a normal people in England (.)
 1185 [because
 1186 Silvia: [well probably it's because
 1187 Fed: because we studied
 1188 Silvia: eh eh
 1189 Fed: it it's normal that you study a lot the
 1190 language you know you focus on the
 1191 grammar an::d therefore you you really
 1192 go: for the grammar [and not the
 1193 speaking
 1194 Silvia: [yeah but if you
 1195 Fed: I have a lot of foreign [friends
 1196 Silvia: [if you're gonna
 1197 live (.) there you will be able to to:: to to
 1198 speak it erm: (.) properly so you will be
 1199 better than a native speaker because you
 1200 you studied and then y- y- you you've
 1201 been there [I don't know
 1202 Fed: [yeah ye-
 1203 [yeah
 1204 Maria: [that's what you're saying
 1205 Fed: yeah exactly=
 1206 Maria: =you're agreed
 1207 Fed: what I'm saying yes
 1208 Silvia: I didn't understand what you said that's
 1209 why
 1210 Fed: well then I said it right
 1211 ((laughter))
 1212 Silvia: ok ((laughs))

1213 Rosa: cos English is like easier than Italian
 1214 [because
 1215 Fed: [yes (xx)
 1216 Rosa: =like sometimes like i make a sentence
 1217 and which is like completely makes
 1218 sense to me like even if I've translated it
 1219 to my language or English like it's a
 1220 translation from it they say like no: it
 1221 just does not make sense in Italy ((fillipo
 1222 laughs)) in Italian I'm like why? no it's
 1223 just like that just er: *we don't* say it like
 1224 it doesn't make [sense
 1225 Silvia: [because
 1226 [Italian
 1227 Fed: [pr- probably
 1228 it's grammarly is correct but we don't
 1229 say it like that because
 1230 Rosa: yeah
 1231 Fed: we don't go for the grammar just go for
 1232 the (.)
 1233 Silvia: use of Italian ((laughs))
 1234 Fed: expression
 1235 Alan: ah that's interesting because you know
 1236 when you get that feedback you don't
 1237 feel you know where to go
 1238 Rosa: yeah yeah (xx)
 1239 Alan: if I understand correctly you're saying
 1240 ok but (.)
 1241 Silvia: why?
 1242 Alan: = so? ((general laughter))
 1243 Fed: why not?
 1244 Alan so? what do I do next? you know you
 1245 know is that what you're saying?

1246 Rosa: yeah I can like every time that I I want
 1247 to like translate or like interpret I'm
 1248 thinking like does it make sense for them
 1249 do they say it like that? And (.) I mean
 1250 ((laughs)) it's it's not grammar it's just
 1251 that they say it like we don't use it like
 1252 that in Italian and there's lots of things
 1253 that doesn't use it in Italian like that or
 1254 [we use
 1255 Silvia: [well
 1256 Rosa: it like that [(xx)
 1257 Alan: [give me an example
 1258 For example in the classroom when this
 1259 happened
 1260 Rosa: right now nothing comes in my mind
 1261 ((laughs))
 1262 Alan: no? quite specific
 1263 Rosa: erm::: (..) nothing comes into my mind
 1264 but I just like because I remember like
 1265 just like people saying to me a lot that
 1266 phrase that does not make sense (xx)
 1267 Alan: without giving you an explanation?
 1268 Rosa: sometimes yah but sometimes yah it's
 1269 like also oh I'll solve it yeah grammatics
 1270 stuff or they didn't use those words but
 1271 Silvia: trust me it doesn't mean that you were
 1272 wrong [becau:se
 1273 Fed: [well I don't understand what her
 1274 most of the times ((general laughter)) (..)
 1275 and [I like
 1276 Silvia: [because he's from
 1277 the north I am from the south that's
 1278 Alan: oh you too
 1279 Silvia: yah

1280 (xxxx)
 1281 Fed: (xx) most of the time we don't yes
 1282 Alan: are you jo:king?
 1283 (xxxx)
 1284 Silvia: you can't understand my dialect I can't
 1285 understand yours and I don't want to but
 1286 Fed: yeah that's it
 1287 Alan: but you two speak a dialect together?
 1288 Fed: no [(xxx)
 1289 Silvia: [maybe it's not dialect it's
 1290 [li:ke=
 1291 Fed: [it's what
 1292 we think is [italian
 1293 Silvia: [slang
 1294 Maria: I don't know it's a sort of slang
 1295 Silvia: it's a sort of slang it's not even dialect
 1296 bu:t er:
 1297 Maria: yeah if we are saying really simple que-
 1298 er: sentences questions to each other we
 1299 have no idea what the other is talking
 1300 about or we think it's something else
 1301 because if you ask for a cicca ((Italian
 1302 word)) ((Federico laughs)) in turin it's a
 1303 cigarette it's not a chewing gum (.) if
 1304 you ask it here it's a chewing gum
 1305 Fed: she obliged me today to ask her for a
 1306 gigomma instead for a cicclas
 1307 Maria: yeah
 1308 Fed: as I said [(xxx)
 1309 Maria: [we say ciglas
 1310 Fed: and I don't know why it should be a
 1311 gigomma there's no [g
 1312 Silvia: [chewing gum

1313 Fed: chewing gum ((incredulous high pitched
 1314 voice)) it's a [ci:
 1315 Silvia: [yeah
 1316 Fed: ci: ci: I don't see why it should be a
 1317 [g::
 1318 Silvia: [yeah but
 1319 some people
 1320 Fed: no:
 1321 Silvia: from person to person it changes and so
 1322 from chewing gum to gigomma
 1323 Fed: (xxx)
 1324 Silvia: so from ci to g
 1325 Fed: she wouldn't=
 1326 Maria: =it happens
 1327 Fed: give up (.) it's normal ((silvia laughs))
 1328 it's:
 1329 Maria: come on you said in russian you know it
 1330 happens ((laughs))
 1331 Alan: is that why you find you found professor
 1332 rutland so impressive?
 1333 Fed: I don- wel- ((silvia laughs)) (.) no I I'm
 1334 not saying I'm just saying yes it didn't
 1335 quite strike me th- the italian but yes he
 1336 talks a really good italian (.)
 1337 Alan: but it just seems to me you're you're=
 1338 Fed: =he's teaching in italy I don't see why
 1339 he shouldn't
 1340 Silvia: w- we- I was just making an example
 1341 Fed: no no no I'm er: i'm not saying you were
 1342 saying bullshit I'm ((silvia laughs))
 1343 saying it's er. I I
 1344 believe in every every teacher should
 1345 talk a good italian
 1346 Alan: so- sorry m- matteo

1347 Matteo: bu- but even erm: he's erm:
 1348 pronunciation (.) is perfect
 1349 Silvia: ah
 1350 Maria: yeah he doesn't even have an accent
 1351 Matteo: yes
 1352 Silvia: well a little [bit bu-
 1353 Matteo: [he doesn't have an
 1354 english accent
 1355 ((two or three voices overlapping))
 1356 I couldn't say he was an an english
 1357 teacher I thoug- thought he was he was
 1358 (..) italian and not an english teacher (.)
 1359 and it was amazing (.) and I: think if
 1360 just not a method of grammar cos I'm:
 1361 well erm: (..) you know this is my
 1362 second bachelor degree and I have a
 1363 friend of mine erm: who studied with me
 1364 at the university of rome (.) em: well she
 1365 has the highest level possible of japanese
 1366 proficiency (.) she's amazing an:d she
 1367 has been in japan fo:r er:: three years
 1368 and she just told me that well if you
 1369 want to learn a language (.) just that well
 1370 if you want to learn a language just go to
 1371 the country and forget your grammar
 1372 Silvia: hm
 1373 Matteo: just forget your grammar
 1374 Maria: yeah
 1375 Matteo: live there and then you will be: (.)
 1376 proficent in that language (..) and I think
 1377 it's amazing it's just not a matter of
 1378 grammar it's not a matter it's I think it's
 1379 a matter of use of the language
 1380 Silvia: [yeah but even the grammar

1381 Matteo: [(xxxxx)]
1382 Silvia: [because
1383 Alan: [could I just ask
1384 (.) you said when you were at rutland's
1385 lesson
1386 Matteo: hm m
1387 Alan: and th- then you thought he was italian
1388 Matteo: yes
1389 Alan: can you tell me (.) how that episode
1390 developed? (...)
1391 Fed: heh talk in english ((general laughter))
1392 Matteo: er::: no: well ((silvia talks in
1393 background)) he said just a few things
1394 that well (.) then the pronunciation of
1395 those few words well could er: well I
1396 said ok he's english [but
1397 Maria: [ehm
1398 Alan: sorry
1399 Maria: I'd said [that
1400 Alan: [can I just
1401 Maria: he could have been foreign not english
1402 yeah I was [th- there's (something weird)
1403 Matteo: [yes foreign
1404 Maria: but I wouldn't be able to say where he
1405 comes from
1406 Fed: if we didn't know he was an english
1407 teacher
1408 Maria: yeah
1409 ((overlap of voices))
1410 Alan: but I'm not quite following how it
1411 worked how this thing developed I mean
1412 he spoke so good so well
1413 Silvia: well he started speaking in italian
1414 Alan: ri:ght

1415 Silvia: and we we're like (.) wo:w because it
 1416 was a really good italian
 1417 Alan: yah
 1418 Silvia: we expect to er I don't know we expect a:
 1419 (.) I don't (.) a good italian I I don't say
 1420 a bad italian but not that good I mean it's
 1421 more than a native speaker (..) because I
 1422 don't speak like that ((small laugh))
 1423 even [the pronunciation
 1424 Fed: [he's
 1425 teaching us mediation
 1426 [he's teaching us=
 1427 Maria: [= (xxx) =
 1428 Fed: =to talk like we don- we don't have any
 1429 i- italian accent why shouldn't we expect
 1430 him to have the same
 1431 ((overlapping talk with maria))
 1432 Silvia: I wasn't expecting that (.) oh come on
 1433 Maria: he's teaching translation
 1434 Silvia: (1.0) yes (come on)
 1435 Fed: still ((laughs)) (.) no I think it's we have
 1436 a lot of good teachers an- and I think the
 1437 english ones a: are:: the one who are (.)
 1438 and it's come back to russia I think it's a
 1439 th- the one who are pushing more to er:
 1440 (..) know italian for example and I it's
 1441 what I look for in my erm studying er:
 1442 Silvia: well I didn't expect that right
 1443 Federico: [my development
 1444 Silvia: [I didn't expect that right
 1445 Fed: because I want to be like that
 1446 Silvia: ok
 1447 Fed: that's why [I: (xxx)
 1448 Silvia: [me too

1449 I'm not saying that
 1450 Alan: how did you feel and think looking back
 1451 to matteo you started this how did you
 1452 feel and think when you heard his italian
 1453 (.) personally
 1454 Matteo: (...) I want to be like him ((general
 1455 laughter)) in Japanese in english in
 1456 german yes cos i: (.) I really want to
 1457 become an interpreter (.) cos i:: m:: (.) I
 1458 like the this job I:: (.) well I attended the
 1459 classes of valentina moscato the
 1460 interpreter: the italian interpreter and
 1461 well er: m: she: she: gave us her
 1462 feedback about the interpreter
 1463 experience er:: there's a lot of stress a lot
 1464 of m: (2.0) a lot of stress lot m: and
 1465 Rosa: she's kinda negative to be honest=
 1466 ((general laughter))
 1467 Matteo: =yes
 1468 Rosa: about it
 1469 Matteo: yes yes yes
 1470 Rosa: about the interpreting (.)'all the time
 1471 she's saying (.) I actually want to ask her
 1472 if she regrets her choice ((laughter))
 1473 because she's always saying that 'it's so:
 1474 much stre::ss it's so mu:ch ((high
 1475 pitched intonation, whining tone))
 1476 [you won't have any
 1477 Maria: [(it's just for the competition)
 1478 Rosa: other life if you're interpreting
 1479 Fed: (xxxxxxxx)
 1480 Rosa: if you want to become an [interpreter
 1481 Maria: [(xxxxxxxx)
 1482 Rosa: and it's kinda negative

1483 Alan: yes
 1484 Maria: yes she talked about talent (..)
 1485 Rosa: mm
 1486 Alan: ah:
 1487 Matteo: ah (.) yes (.) she said erm: if you want
 1488 to if you want to be an interpreter you
 1489 have to (.) well you need talent
 1490 Alan: un hu
 1491 Silvia: ok I'm out= ((laughs, general laughter))
 1492 Matteo: =and we said oh my god do i have
 1493 talent or not (.) an:::d cos she just said
 1494 well you have to know the language you
 1495 have to know the the grammar the word
 1496 the vocabulary (.) all these things but (.)
 1497 there's a: (..) a: percent m:: needed to be
 1498 an interpreter (.) then well you have to
 1499 you need talent to do that to do that job
 1500 (.) a::nd well the:: the classroom the
 1501 other students were all (.) scared cos
 1502 they just said well do we have talent or
 1503 not (.) and but she said well if you're
 1504 here at the Sslmit you have talent
 1505 ((matter of fact tone)) (.)
 1506 Alan: hmm
 1507 Matteo: (.) and so (.) I don't know what what
 1508 does she mean with talent or not (.) but
 1509 well
 1510 Rosa: her explanation was if we have dou:ble
 1511 personality: ((general laughter))
 1512 Matteo: ahh
 1513 Fed: Is that a good thing or:
 1514 Rosa: [xxx] she said a really good thing she
 1515 was she said yeah I used like to see

1516 another me in front of me and I was
 1517 talking to myself so it's a really=
 1518 Fed: good thing
 1519 Rosa: good thing
 1520 Silvia: (xxx)
 1521 Alan: talking to myself in::
 1522 Rosa: erm like she told us that she used to see
 1523 herself as exactly as she was staying like
 1524 sitting in- like next to her and in her
 1525 mind she was always talking to herself
 1526 for example she said [that I was talking
 1527 to someone and she was telling
 1528 Fed: [we were all going
 1529 ((makes sound and gesture of mocking
 1530 disbelief))
 1531 [xxxxxxx]
 1532 Rosa: was telling me like oh look at the hair of
 1533 her and stuff like she was like that the
 1534 other was always talking to me make fun
 1535 of people to say something about people
 1536 and stuff like that
 1537 Matteo: I think she was kidding she was just
 1538 said that well you have to be mad you
 1539 have to be mad to do that to do this job
 1540 cos it's a really important job you:: have
 1541 to have to study the whole life cos you::
 1542 you never stop learning you:: yes you
 1543 have to study all your life
 1544 Alan: this question of talent (.) when you came
 1545 into the university some of you in our
 1546 one to one
 1547 Interview said you had the speech at the
 1548 beginning and talent was mentioned and
 1549 you got into the best institution in Italy

1550 and you are the top of the top and people
 1551 well some some of the students said they
 1552 were quite impressed some were quite
 1553 shocked by this speech and it made a
 1554 good it made a strong impression on
 1555 them how do you feel your talent has
 1556 developed in your first term do you feel
 1557 as confident or perhaps you didn't feel
 1558 confident (.) have you developed? Has
 1559 your talent increased or decreased (.) how
 1560 do you feel about the (.) talent ?
 1561 ((General laughter))
 1562 Silvia: about [the talent
 1563 Fed: [it's disgusting
 1564 Silvia: What
 1565 Fed: disgusting word it's
 1566 ((general laughter))
 1567 (xx) we're talking ((cough interrupts
 1568 speaker))
 1569 Alan: you don't like the word [how wh: what
 1570 sorry
 1571 Silvia: [xxxx
 1572 Fed: (xxx) an american ideal it's not like we
 1573 [xxxx
 1574 Silvia: [xxxx
 1575 ((laughter))
 1576 Fed: (..) which subjects m:: (..) we all know
 1577 and maybe we all are a bit better at
 1578 something or
 1579 something else but we are not studying:
 1580 erm I cannot even think anything (.) we
 1581 are not studying to become a painter
 1582 they:: it's not like er: m: drawing er:: our
 1583 profession's going to be going to be

1584 more:: (..) surgical more technical than
 1585 what talent is required for that I think
 1586 but maybe it's you know my deviated
 1587 [m:: perception of talent
 1588 Silvia: [well
 1589 no I think you:: if you've got talent your
 1590 lucky but (.) well you can achieve your
 1591 goal even if you don't have it because
 1592 you are studying hard or whatever (.) m:
 1593 I don't think I have talent but and I don't
 1594 think I got in because I was talented but
 1595 (.) I:: from the first semester I learnt that
 1596 there are a lot of people who are really
 1597 talented here and but I am not afraid I I
 1598 usually will be but I'm not afraid
 1599 because it makes you work harder and
 1600 harder to achieve your goal so: (.)
 1601 [it's a good thing
 1602 Fed: [this talent it it's
 1603 [quite
 1604 Silvia: [there are there are people
 1605 who are keen
 1606 Fed: oh yes yes I think what I have achieved I
 1607 have achieved because I did a lot
 1608 together it's not because I'm talented I
 1609 hope because it was I studied hard and I
 1610 practice and I did
 1611 A lot not just because [(xxx)
 1612 Silvia: [there are people
 1613 who can speak
 1614 er [fluently
 1615 Fed: [yes yes
 1616 Silvia: more fluent more than others so: (.)
 1617 there's a thing called talent for me

1618 Maria: well (.) well I don't agree with that cos if
 1619 you see I don't know I didn't check the
 1620 (.) la classifica ((Italian))
 1621 Alan: er:: the classification
 1622 Maria: the classification again I just see I was
 1623 pass and that was it but (.) there are
 1624 some people in our first english course
 1625 that really amazing with grammar and so
 1626 they took the maximum point in the
 1627 classification who were between the first
 1628 twenty that's great but when they talk (.)
 1629 I I al Italian and I can't understand their
 1630 Italian accent so it doesn't depend on
 1631 talent that's what they studied they were
 1632 great with grammar and they probably
 1633 didn't have the chance to (.) speak the::
 1634 English or whatever the language so I do
 1635 not agree with the word talent because it
 1636 seems really good if you are in the first a
 1637 hundred that got in
 1638 Alan: hm:
 1639 Maria:and it seems like a justification (.)
 1640 if you're if you got in from 101 to I
 1641 don't know to 180 (.) an::d I think it's it
 1642 was used in a bad way because there are
 1643 a lot of people who try for the second or
 1644 third time to get in here (.) and that's bad
 1645 what does it mean last year I wasn't
 1646 talented and this year I am? It doesn't it
 1647 doesn't so I didn't like the word talent
 1648 and then:: I mean it was good to feel that
 1649 way the first day you're finally here you
 1650 got it you did it you've been able to get

1651 here and the (test) and (.) everything (.)
1652 you did it
1653 Alan: hm hm
1654 Maria: that's great (.) but I don't think the word
1655 talent was what I was expecting (.)
1656 Alan: wh what word would you use?
1657 Maria: (..) I would use (.) err: (...)
1658 congratulation (.) you did it (.) now keep
1659 on it it's not like you get in so you're an
1660 interpreter no way (.) [you have
1661 Alan [congratulation
1662 suggests you passed something I think
1663 but you're talking about something
1664 that's not talent
1665 Maria: it's not talent it's hard work
1666 Alan: ah [so it's hard work
1667 Maria: [it's passion (.)
1668 it's passion
1669 [I'm not saying
1670 Silvia: [yeah (maybe passion)
1671 Maria: I'm ready to bet that someone who
1672 didn't get in was way more talented than
1673 what I am
1674 Alan: but you don't believe in talent?
1675 Maria: no but that's what I'm saying talented
1676 I'm saying er::_maybe he deserved it
1677 more than me i:: I sometimes I feel like
1678 I'm cheating because I got in just
1679 because I stayed one year abroad I
1680 wouldn't I wouldn't have been able to
1681 get in otherwise I'm sure about it so I
1682 feel like I'm cheating and I feel (.) way:
1683 less than people who haven't had this
1684 chance that I [I

1685 Alan: [why why
 1686 cheating?
 1687 Maria: cheating because I I don't know?
 1688 because somebody did it without going
 1689 abroad (.) and I haven't been able to
 1690 pass the test in Trieste (.) so:: talent
 1691 wasn't the word I was I wanted I wanted
 1692 to hear (.) absolutely not
 1693 Silvia: I'm I'm not saying that you are talented
 1694 if you get get in (.) I'm saying that (.)
 1695 [there are people
 1696 Maria: [it's not what you saying
 1697 it's what we: were welcomed with (.)
 1698 they said ohh you're the more talented
 1699 one ((gushing)) the best of the best
 1700 you're the la crème delle crème
 1701 Silvia: yeah I don't I don't but I'm not saying
 1702 that they can say whatever they want
 1703 [but I disagree
 1704 Maria: [I'm disagreeing with you
 1705 Silvia: ah yeah but I'm disagreeing too what I
 1706 meant by talent I mean (.) there are
 1707 people in here maybe they are talented in
 1708 speaking there are people who are
 1709 talented in grammar I don't know there
 1710 are lots of things I think talent does exist
 1711 but it's not what they (.) er tell us
 1712 Rosa: I don't think it really does matter in a
 1713 sense [professionally
 1714 Silvia: [no you don't get in
 1715 because you are talented because there
 1716 are a lot of people I I don't think I'm
 1717 talented I jus:t studied this summer and
 1718 what talent is for me when for example

1719 er (.) you can speak as you are like you
 1720 are a native speaker or you can write like
 1721 you are an English writer that's (talent)
 1722 as he said a painter (.) you're talented
 1723 because you can paint a lot of beautiful
 1724 things and people er:: will er:: start to
 1725 know you to congratulate you and that's
 1726 talent because you can do something
 1727 maybe with passion and you are able to
 1728 do it in a different way in a good way
 1729 but it's not that you are here because you
 1730 are talented
 1731 Alan: so what about chris Rutland let's come
 1732 back to professor rutland ((laughter)) is
 1733 he talented? Or is it just hard work?
 1734 Matteo: how long has he been in italy?
 1735 Maria: I think more than professor barnard
 1736 Fed: how much is that?
 1737 Maria: I don't know professor barnard has been
 1738 working here since '93 in here and he
 1739 was teaching in italy before that
 1740 Fed: there you go
 1741 Silvia: I can't really say if he's talented or not I
 1742 just like his way of teaching and accent
 1743 Alan: Matteo you were the first person who
 1744 seemed who seemed to be quite (.)
 1745 struck by his
 1746 Matteo: I don't [kno::w
 1747 Alan: [good Italian
 1748 Matteo: if he has talent because I I just don't
 1749 know him m: well I: want to attend the
 1750 classes I want to see the way how the
 1751 way he teaches and I can say if he: has
 1752 talent or not but well er::m I don't

1753 believe in talent because er:: it's just a
 1754 ma- it's just a matter of erm of erm a
 1755 word (.) you can call it m: (..) in many
 1756 different ways but I think it's just a
 1757 matter of a matter of hard work I think
 1758 that m: when we ge: when we got in the
 1759 er:: the sslmit when well we had
 1760 something that the others students didn't
 1761 have because I think that the wha-
 1762 what's needed to get in this university is
 1763 not taught at the high school er:: the the
 1764 level of the test is (.) high and the the
 1765 level of English or german or French
 1766 taught at the at at the high school (.) is
 1767 hm: is is not sufficient to get in the
 1768 ssmlit
 1769 Alan: hmm
 1770 Matteo: an:: well if you're able to get in the
 1771 ssmlit you have studied hard but not at
 1772 school you have studied h: har: hard on
 1773 your own er you:: I don't know you: you
 1774 like mm: tv shows you like tv series you
 1775 like hm: English books you like (.) for
 1776 example in my case I like video games
 1777 er: in original language so Japanese
 1778 English language (.) mm: that's what is
 1779 talent it's what make it's something that
 1780 makes you improve (.) erm: and it
 1781 doesn't depend on the school it's
 1782 something else
 1783 Silvia: Sometimes [you pass because
 1784 Matteo: [:its passion its:
 1785 Silvia: you got the right answers for you
 1786 because there are people who

1787 maybe they would have er: (xxx) ((asks
 1788 for help to translate italian word))
 1789 deserved it more than you do so
 1790 sometimes it's luck a great deal of luck
 1791 (.) so: (.) it depends on on because [I
 1792 Matteo: [yeah
 1793 part b is luck
 1794 Silvia: sorry part [b
 1795 Matteo: [part b of the
 1796 test [is luck
 1797 Alan: [the cultural part
 1798 Matteo [xxx] ((laughs))
 1799 Silvia: [yeah yeah
 1800 luck and for for two years I didn't get in
 1801 now I got in (.) why? ((small laugh))
 1802 Alan: hard work?
 1803 Silvia: hard work or luck
 1804 Alan: or cheating ((laughter))
 1805 Silvia: well I've been to London (.) two years
 1806 ago and when I came here came back I
 1807 tried did I get in (how is it how is) it
 1808 works it's not cheating maria (.) it's just
 1809 that you have ah: number of experiences
 1810 or luck than others have so (.) that way
 1811 it's life
 1812 Alan: so let's just finish off today by talking
 1813 about the future then how do you
 1814 imagine yourselves progressing (.) as
 1815 future interpreters in the school? do you
 1816 think (.) what's what's the secret of your
 1817 future success (..)
 1818 Maria: mm::: (..) tea and coffee
 1819 Alan: for Russian?

1820 Maria: hm:: no it's just (.) it might be passion
 1821 and (..) it might be (.) the willing to keep
 1822 on going (.) so::
 1823 Alan: what about the teachers and the
 1824 institution?
 1825 Maria: the teachers i::=
 1826 Alan: =cos you did criticise a little bit
 1827 Maria: I did criticise I'm really happy with them
 1828 Alan: hmm
 1829 Maria: if I if I didn't care I wouldn't criticise at
 1830 all I'd just say whatever an::d and since
 1831 they're really good and since I meet
 1832 people who are really good in what
 1833 they're doing I can also see if they're
 1834 doing something wrong it looks way
 1835 bigger than a normal teacher so (..) I'm
 1836 hopefully I'm hopeful for the future and
 1837 (.) think it will be great an::d it will be
 1838 tiring (.) really tiring an::d I'm going to
 1839 need support from anybody who can
 1840 give it because sometimes you just
 1841 wanna sit down and say wh why?
 1842 Alan: hmm
 1843 Maria: does it really matter? Well I think that if
 1844 I'm able to say but I really like it so let's
 1845 do it let's (.) keep on doing it (..)
 1846 [an::d
 1847 Alan: [so passion an:
 1848 is is very important
 1849 [if I understand
 1850 Maria: [passion and support
 1851 Alan: Support from whom?
 1852 Maria: family and friends because (.) if you see:
 1853 I don't know when you see your friends

1854 they all well it's just a degree it doesn't
1855 matter you're not gonna get work
1856 anywhere and there is a crisis an::d (.
1857 nobody cares it's just about money it's
1858 only about who knows who and no what
1859 no I don't think it's that way and I think
1860 my university is one of the best one and
1861 I really want to do this job so:: I think I
1862 can do it

1863 Alan: hm m

1864 Maria: I think I can do it I think I can do it get
1865 to it

1866 Alan: hm m

1867 Maria: and family because (.) maybe sometimes
1868 you choose some languages that they
1869 don't really agree with they say oh why
1870 would you study Portuguese? You'd get
1871 to know it in (..) in ten seconds you just
1872 go to brazil or to portugal and you know
1873 a month then you can speak it that's ok
1874 ok

1875 Alan: hm mm

1876 Maria: ok but it's important to have a family
1877 that can say to you (.) well you can do it
1878 you just have to work harder

1879 Alan: ok what about everybody else? (..) same
1880 question (...) ste- fillipo do [you care
1881 ((laughs))

1882 Fed: [(xxx) less

1883 Alan: less what?

1884 Fed: less emphasis probably er that [xxxx

1885 Silvia: [xxxx

1886 ((whispered quick exchange between the two))

1887 Fed: no yes she she:: pretty much said it all (.)
 1888 I think yes I'll I'll probably pull through
 1889 more than she will erm: literally
 1890 meaning through and erm: because what
 1891 I wanna do is not study but go there and
 1892 learn it so erm: I'm going to (.) erm:
 1893 well of course I need to study to
 1894 graduate and to and what I'm looking for
 1895 is to is not to (.) the graduation you
 1896 know but the day after when you take
 1897 your luggage and leave and learn the
 1898 language somewhere and em:: (..)
 1899 Alan: so you don't see the institution as being
 1900 a place where to learn the language?
 1901 Fed: no no no I do but I think it won't be
 1902 enough for my erm: erm: (...) I don't I
 1903 don't think it's enough for me to learn it
 1904 that well as I would need so I think its it
 1905 will be what gives me the possibility to
 1906 (.) pick up my luggage and leave and
 1907 learn it really because its er::; it will have
 1908 the: m:: good level but I don't want a
 1909 good level erm: otherwise I wouldn't
 1910 study all these year if I wanted just a
 1911 good level I would have just left and
 1912 learned it in the everyday use of the
 1913 language er: I want to learn here what
 1914 gives me after the (..) great err I think
 1915 erm I mean I want the basis to really
 1916 really know the language perfectly when
 1917 I will pick it up as a (.) living skill
 1918 required skill (..)
 1919 Alan: ok (.) silvia (.)
 1920 Silvia: I think you (.) you need a strong will

1921 Alan: hm m
 1922 Silvia: yah
 1923 Alan why?
 1924 Silvia: verily friends are important because
 1925 sometimes you don't think you can do it
 1926 on your own (.) but a strong will because
 1927 family can't ((not clear sounds like can))
 1928 do it for you or friends can't do it for
 1929 you (.) you have [too
 1930 Alan [sorry they can or they
 1931 can't
 1932 Silvia: can't
 1933 Alan: can't ok
 1934 Silvia: (xx) can't ok and so: you have to believe
 1935 yourself ((small laugh)) it's a phrase that
 1936 you hear every where but it's true it's
 1937 actually true because I got in when I
 1938 started to believe in myself and work
 1939 hard because I I took it for the two years
 1940 but I didn't pass I took it as a (.) as a
 1941 game
 1942 Alan: hm mm
 1943 Silvia: when I started to take it seriously (.) I
 1944 got in (.) because sometimes in life you
 1945 have to take things seriously you don-
 1946 you can't play all the time but now I get
 1947 in I have the time to play too so: I mean
 1948 it's like (.) erm I don't know how to say
 1949 it in English even in Italian (xx) but (.)
 1950 you have to get to gather all the forces
 1951 you can gather (.) yours your friends or
 1952 your family and keep on doing what
 1953 you want to do because it's the passion

1954 that (.) keeps you (..) going passion and
 1955 will strong will (.)
 1956 Alan: hmm ok Roxanne?
 1957 Rosa: mm: I think for me patience maybe
 1958 ((laughs with alan)) the thing about I
 1959 heard that everybody thinks professor
 1960 rutland is speaking so good because I
 1961 mean I don't understand it of course I
 1962 like if when I hear that it's even possible
 1963 for somebody to become like have that
 1964 grade of language like the mother tongue
 1965 people would say that he had it like
 1966 better than them because I I thought it's
 1967 not possible to have an accent that
 1968 nobody would understand like if you're
 1969 from you're not from Italy or not
 1970 because if I like when I started saying
 1971 hello how are you in Italian everybody
 1972 was like oh well you're not Italian like I
 1973 did not say any::thing ((laughter)) how
 1974 can you say that? And I look kinda
 1975 Italian I think er but everybody like er: I
 1976 don't know but really like like I don't
 1977 know it's some sentence smallest
 1978 sentence of all I think maybe ahh I need
 1979 to have patience ((laughs)) (..)
 1980 Alan: patience
 1981 Rosa: I usually expect too much of myself so
 1982 hmm
 1983 Alan: (..) ok Matteo
 1984 Matteo: well I'm::: (...) I'm quite confident
 1985 about the future erm: because even
 1986 though outsi- outside the world outside
 1987 is a jungle m: one thing one thing is for

1988 sure I will keep trying and trying until I I
 1989 become one of the best interpreters (.)
 1990 an:d I think it's just a matter of passion
 1991 (.) erm: cos I have mm:: I have (.)well
 1992 all my friends just erm at first erm sai:
 1993 said oh my god you're getting a second
 1994 bachelor degree? ((mimics shocked
 1995 tone)) you're mad you:: (.) it's just crazy
 1996 but I:: I love the foreign languages and I
 1997 love the job of the interpreter and it
 1998 doesn't matter the:: the work load it
 1999 doesn't matter how many years it will
 2000 take to become the interpreter I want to
 2001 become but (.) I will do it I think I can
 2002 do it and I think I have the passion not
 2003 the talent I have the passion to do it (.)
 2004 and I'll keep trying and trying
 2005 Alan: hurray::: ((laughter)) ((alan claps)) thank
 2006 you very much ok thank you very much

Second Interview session

Federico 2: Second interview

- 1 Alan: so federico i just want to ask you (.) how
2 has the last term gone for you? What sort
3 of experiences you have had?
- 4 Fed: yeah it,s (...) erm i like the first more I
5 don't know it was maybe the classes or
6 something i think it's er (we did less)
7 and i mean it's not such a bad thing (not
8 having to do a) translation (every
9 weekend) a couple of translations and er
10 but you feel like you're doing more or
11 less nothing (.) but for English really (x
12 italian I didn't do nothing xxxx) but yeah
13 fine
- 14 Alan: you say you've done less this term
- 15 Fed: yes but i think it is also how the class
16 was er (.) thought in the first term you
17 have a lot of exercises (at home xxx
18 more or less it (.) is done) this term was
19 more (..)work in class and less at home
20 which is (..) because you have the other
21 languages you have to study (and do
22 homework xx) erm (..) well er (..) you're
23 doing more in class and less on your own
24 (.) on your (..) on your own and it's it's
25 (..) feels like you're doing less ((small
26 laugh))
- 27 Alan: is that because you have different
28 teachers or different
- 29 Fed: no no it was how the class was thought (.)
30 you know (.) a lot of work in class and
31 not much at home which is (.) ideally it's

32 better because you are doing (.) the
 33 translation with the teacher (.) instead of
 34 doing it at home and the teacher will tell
 35 you oh yeah that could be ok not really
 36 having a (...) real translation (xx) yes so
 37 this term was more (2.0) you saw more
 38 the dynamics of translation and er erm
 39 (3.0) yeah really (did translation) rather
 40 in the first one we did what we always
 41 did within translation more or less it's (.)
 42 yeah it's a different (.) approach but (3.0)
 43 Alan: is this from italian to english and english
 44 into italian both ways
 45 Fed: yes this term was only italian into
 46 english
 47 Alan: right
 48 Fed: the first time one was into- from italian
 49 into er from english to italian (or was it)
 50 oh yes it was
 51 Alan: right (.) and your teachers were?
 52 Fed: er this term iechivelo a:nd rutland
 53 Alan: right
 54 Fed: (rutland) yeah (that's) the name (.)
 55 rutland
 56 Alan: rutland (.) so did you find there there (.)
 57 did you find it helpful the way they did
 58 their classes ?
 59 Fed: erm i thought the class was very well
 60 thought I didn't particularly care for mr
 61 rutland's ((small laugh)) classes really
 62 but erm but because it was probably
 63 because it was less it was less er:
 64 cooperation between the students and the
 65 teacher not because of the teacher i mean

66 we i don't know why it probably because
 67 it was intimidating you know just (..)
 68 ((small laugh)) be silent in his classes
 69 and there's less er (..) talking about
 70 translation so: er me i was the first not to
 71 really interact er
 72 Alan: why was that? Do you think
 73 Fed: i don't know it was more boring
 74 ((laughs)) so i didn't really feel like (.)
 75 saying much (.) and there's always the
 76 one who wants to talk so we let him talk
 77 and (.) eventually stuff comes out (.) so
 78 Alan: but that was because the material that
 79 you were translating was boring or the
 80 lesson plan was not exciting?
 81 Fed: erm:: well in the first term we did
 82 cooking so i don't think it's ((laughs)) er
 83 the material (xx) the problem erm i don't
 84 know it's (3.0) they didn't (it's also that
 85 we had a lot of) i think they did less
 86 classes this term i'm not sure but er
 87 probably not but it always erm the first
 88 term felt (I don't know xx) we went
 89 deeper into the different types of (..)
 90 articles we should translate probably
 91 because there were there were less types
 92 (xx) i don't remember if there was
 93 another this one it was (tourism) and
 94 geography and erm (...) we did a
 95 biography and we did a technical erm
 96 text and stuff like like that which is
 97 interesting of course but then again we
 98 do not have that in the exam we don't
 99 have a technical text in the exam we

100 should know it we should learn how to
101 do that but we should also know really
102 well what to do in the exam so we had a
103 lot of stuff but never I think really
104 (deeply into one)
105 Alan: this year
106 Fed: this term (.) yes
107 Alan: this term (.) so it was less last term but
108 more concentrated
109 Fed: yeah
110 Alan: and this term very
111 Fed: very yeah very interesting probably
112 because there is a lot of very different
113 things and they are all very different so
114 you know you do one week you're
115 talking about (..) bora-bora or: whatever
116 and then the last the next week you're
117 talking about the: (..) set up of a
118 computer or what was it so it's fun
119 because it's different stuff and it's not
120 always the same but then again you're
121 not really looking into the ones
122 particularly and probably also doing it in
123 class (.) you have the the professor there
124 you have 30 other people around you so
125 you really have to think what to write if
126 you are all alone you have to translate it
127 you have to come up with something if
128 you are in class (.) even supposedly
129 ((laughs)) you hear translation (which
130 comes along) (xxx)
131 Alan: but there was less homework there was
132 less [(xx)

133 Fed: (xxx) there was more or less no
 134 homework i i think (or if there was I
 135 didn't do it or) i i didn't realise ((laughs))
 136 erm but (.) it (.)it's er: since you do not
 137 have to work on your own (.) you: (.)
 138 probably put less into the translation less
 139 effort less:
 140 Alan: hm (.)
 141 Fed: (xxx)
 142 Alan: right so it was more (.) feedback more:
 143 Fed: yes more feedback of course and more:
 144 erm: (4.0) (i don't know) at the
 145 beginning of the lesson we would start
 146 (and brainstorm the ideas and what kind)
 147 er: vocabulary you might need (.) but
 148 (having it on the board) just there and
 149 it's also it's already there (and so when
 150 you xx to translation) and when you
 151 translate the text you have already what
 152 you will need you don't have to come up
 153 with it
 154 Alan: right
 155 Fed: on your own (.) you have to come up
 156 with it at the beginning of the lesson but
 157 it's no it's different doing it on your own
 158 (than in a class with 30 people and a
 159 professor who says) yes that's the best
 160 way
 161 Alan: right
 162 Fed: it's [a:
 163 Alan: [so the first year was different then?
 164 Fed: yep er still I'm not sure (.) which one I
 165 prefer
 166 Alan: hm

167 Fed: it's very different (.) probably it's good
 168 we had both
 169 Alan: so in the first year they just gave you
 170 texts go away translate and we'll look at
 171 it afterwards
 172 Fed: not just like that almost yes hmm you it I
 173 don't know maybe 5 or 6 sentences in
 174 class and then you finish the translation
 175 at home and then you go and look at it
 176 again in class and then someone reads it
 177 out loud and we hear what other people
 178 translated
 179 Alan: right
 180 Fed: well in this term we: erm we started (xx)
 181 looking at what would be the problems
 182 in the text and really it's how we are
 183 going to do it (if we have a translation in
 184 front of us) we look at it (.) we see
 185 what's the problems and how to rewrite
 186 it and how to: (whatever) but we were in
 187 30 people we were 30 people doing it
 188 Alan: hmm
 189 Fed: so I think you should have had the
 190 method of the second the: you know the
 191 analytical view of a translation and what
 192 you have to look for and check up (.)
 193 with more: of the first term (.) on your
 194 own work (.) yeah probably that would
 195 be the best
 196 Alan: right 8.) ok (.) there's too much [class
 197 Fed: [yes
 198 I think so
 199 Alan: hm hm
 200 Fed: for me at least

201 Alan: right and you talked last time you talked
 202 a lot about this sort of competitive nature
 203 of the classroom (.) how did that occur
 204 this this term?
 205 Fed: well probably (.) it's erm (.) probably
 206 less er (.) less of it because people know
 207 each other better and er the: you know
 208 it's more of a: a personal relation with
 209 the people (being) together for one year
 210 more or less
 211 Alan: yeah
 212 Fed: and I'm not the biggest friendly guy in
 213 talking (to everyone but) still you know
 214 everyone you talk to couple of times in
 215 your classes so it's probably er (..) it
 216 shows less probably yes because it's
 217 more you're not always well more or
 218 less always talking about classes and
 219 stuff like that but it's a different
 220 approach (age probably) er (.) when you
 221 talking to people it's not (.) simply the
 222 class and what did I do and what did you
 223 do? it's (work) (.) real (.) talking to
 224 people but probably it shows probably
 225 yes I don't know (xxx and quite care for
 226 it so:) probably yes people are more (xx)
 227 i think there was less of it or it showed
 228 less
 229 Alan: hm (.) considering the beginning of the
 230 degree the first year er and now the end
 231 of the first year how would you say
 232 things have changed over the year? with
 233 regards to (.) relationship between the
 234 students and the subjects and the

235 teachers did you see any changes or
 236 trends?
 237 Fed: you know which ones you really have to
 238 (..) focus on and er: which ones you can
 239 (..) quite not ((laughs)) no but erm I don't
 240 know erm (..) well for example in the
 241 first term I lost I think 2 classes (..) in this
 242 term in the last 2 weeks I lost (..) I don't
 243 know more or less all the absences I
 244 could make (..) because you tell you:
 245 you're more relaxed so you
 246 know you can skip a class and that's not
 247 the end of the world and it's er also
 248 regarding to the teachers you: professors
 249 I should say (..) well (..) ((laughs)) ah the
 250 relation between (...) the students and
 251 the professors it's not exactly a professor
 252 student relationship ((laughing tone))
 253 Alan: no? why?
 254 Fed: well mainly because it's not (..) 10 (..
 255 metres away and it's just (..) here (..) it's
 256 more personal it's (..) it's not a classical
 257 university professor in Italy at least (..
 258 Alan: hm
 259 Fed: (..) generally it's 200 people classes so
 260 it's not (..) personal
 261 Alan: hm m
 262 Fed: a:nd (2.0)
 263 Alan: is that good? do do do you like this
 264 aspect of it?
 265 Fed: em yes I guess so yes it's erm (..) yes
 266 with the funny ones yes ((small laugh)) (..
 267 but still with the one you don't really

268 care for you (.) don't really have to (.)
 269 talk to them ((laughs))
 270 Alan: hm m
 271 Fed: yeah you do the class (and your like) the:
 272 the one you you (...) you like more (.)
 273 you talk to them and it's not (xx)
 274 becomes more of a erm (...) knowing
 275 kinda thing rather than being in the same
 276 room and you teach to me and I learn (.)
 277 Alan: hm m
 278 Fed: so yes it's good because (.) you get to
 279 meet the person and it's good (.) I guess
 280 it's (.) it's a good thing ((laughs))
 281 (..) but yeah really there's (not really)
 282 yeah it's not really that bad ((laughs)) (..)
 283 yes it's yes
 284 Alan: hm (...) some teachers it works well
 285 Fed: yes some others you don't really have to
 286 (I mean those you I don't know those
 287 you don't care for you) (.) it's not like
 288 you're obliged to go and have a pizza
 289 with them so it's like any other day (..) if
 290 you want to stop and talk you talk (xx)
 291 Alan: yeah (.) you said that erm with regards to
 292 Russian (.) you I presume you've kept
 293 the same languages
 294 Fed: yeah
 295 Alan: with regards to Russian you said that it
 296 started at the wrong level it was too
 297 difficult?
 298 Fed: it was not quite the way to teach it to
 299 someone who really doesn't really know
 300 anything about Russian erm (..) it was
 301 erm (...) I don't know it's not like I

302 know how to teach to people like (4.0) a
303 teacher ((laughs)) so I I really don't have
304 any idea of how they should have done it
305 but I saw that how it was done it really
306 didn't quite work for me and there are
307 students who loved the first term and the
308 teacher the first term and (..) I didn't but
309 erm that really doesn't (..) it's not (xxx)
310 (big deal) but this term the teacher is
311 better she she's erm according to me
312 she's not exactly adorable but er
313 ((laughs)) she's very (..) strict at least I
314 mean we are learning Russian we aren't
315 learning I don't know how to fold a
316 piece of paper (we have) to be er (..)
317 methodic and strict she doesn't really put
318 much effort into explaining stuff it's a 30
319 second explanation if you get it well if
320 you don't we have 30 exercises after so
321 after we go to the 30s 30th exercise you
322 have got it you did understand so it's a
323 more practical more: (..) probably a more
324 efficient (.) er way er it's really
325 demanding because you have a lot of
326 homework and she checks it so you have
327 to do it because she checks it in class she
328 makes you read out loud so if you didn't
329 do anything you either know the (.) what
330 the answer should be but you don't know
331 the answer if you do not do the exercise
332 and learn the rules so you just ((xxx) in
333 silence or you do it (.) erm yes it's more
334 of a high school kind of way but for this
335 better because it obliges you to do it

336 even if you know that day you are tired
337 and just want to go away and get to bed
338 you can't because you have to go home
339 and do the homework for the next day
340 and you have to do it every lesson it's
341 more strict (x) course
342 Alan: because you did say I don't know if it
343 was the first teacher that was explaining
344 again and again and you weren't very
345 happy about that
346 Fed: I would have been if she: explained it the
347 first time and the second time it was
348 much it was better and the third time it
349 was better and you got it every time
350 better but since she did it first time in a
351 way the second time she explained it in
352 another way (xxxx) and the third way it
353 was still another way so it was just a
354 huge mess erm (..) so yes it wasn't really
355 useful er: I mean it's useful because she
356 repeats and repeats and repeats (.) so (.)
357 more or less you get something but this
358 second term the more practical way I
359 have to say and I'm (.) kinda sad because
360 it's a lot of work ((laughs)) but it is
361 better er you learn better (.) so
362 Alan: (...) so it's better that erm (.) you also
363 criticised the lot of learning by heart
364 Fed: oh yes that's awful and i: (doesn't) it
365 stays there ((laughs))
366 Alan: yeah?
367 Fed: yes (.) it's awful because I I have no
368 memory but that's not the: you know it's
369 not like I'm (.) there was a natural rule

370 like that we didn't know and er now she
371 told us and it's all easy because (you
372 have the rule and just xxx) so there's a
373 lot of learning by heart (x) it's er you do
374 it (.) ((small laugh)) it's erm we're not
375 studying math (.) where there is always
376 the rule to follow (.) and also there's
377 often the rule and the reason why that
378 rule doesn't work in that particular
379 occasion which (...) is not a rule
380 ((laughs)) I mean it doesn't work in that
381 occasion then you're talking to someone
382 and then it would work in another
383 occasion so it's (.) experience more or
384 less (xxx learn it xx in the end just do it)
385 also for example the other day I went to
386 talk to the teachers who does the
387 lettarto Russian ((small laugh)) and she
388 said that erm for the first year we should
389 just learn the rule (...) but just the rule
390 and just not try to go and erm put
391 something more because we had to right
392 some small (..) essays or whatever so
393 that she corrects them and in the oral
394 exam we we have to talk about the
395 subject and so we have something to go
396 for a:nd and: when we are writing in any
397 language you just don't try to say er talk
398 by this rule the walls are white (.) the
399 door is grey (.) there's a trash can you try
400 to put it in a little bit better way but we
401 don't really know the grammar to do it in
402 a better more articulate way so it turns
403 out we make a lot of mistakes (.)

404 obviously but she doesn't want you to
405 try to do something a little more
406 articulate she only wants you to do it the
407 easy stupid sentences (.) and she she got
408 a little fed up because I was trying to do
409 normal actual sentences someone would
410 say and she was saying oh you have to
411 do it only the rule and er you can't er (.)
412 can't know how to actually write it so
413 you don't it's the first year you just do it
414 and it was weird because I was never
415 told was studying too much or
416 looking too much into something
417 ((laughs)) that really happened but it's er
418 easier actually to be just go for the rule
419 (xxxx) so I should listen to her ((laughs))
420 because it's er better for the exam if I do
421 a simple right sentence rather than a a
422 maybe longer one and more intelligent
423 one but it's completely messed up in the
424 grammar
425 Alan: hmm is that the most important thing the
426 exam you think?
427 Fed: no because I don't work for my exam
428 grades I don't really care for the grades
429 erm: I don't er but I had to do the exams
430 ((laughs)) to get to the end of the to get
431 to the second cla- to the second year so I
432 can do the new class and you learn more
433 this year to learn this and I would hope
434 the the exams are a reflection of what i
435 have to learn in the first year so if I
436 manage to do (..) to learn the right way I
437 have to do for that exam I hope that's

438 what I need to have learned this year (2.0)
 439 at least in the languages I start from zero
 440 Alan: yeah cos you did say last time I think
 441 you were talking about the university
 442 degree and to graduate from the school it
 443 wasn't your main objective linguistically
 444 Fed: no I wanted to learn the language (.) but
 445 still I hope they know how I'm supposed
 446 to learn the language ah not me
 447 Alan: you talked about the school the
 448 graduation as being a sort of springboard
 449 towards learning the language
 450 Fed: to learn a to actually how to use it yes
 451 a:nd that's actually a proof of what this
 452 professor is saying because here I'm
 453 learning the grammar and the: rules and I
 454 have to learn that and not how I'm going
 455 to use a natural sentence I'm not never
 456 gonna to use ((says russian phrase)) I got
 457 to use a full sentence when I talk to a
 458 russian and translate and interpret but
 459 before I have to hear (to learn) based the
 460 core of the sentence and (2.0) hopefully
 461 before the end of the three years I will
 462 know how to make a (..) an actual useful
 463 er sentence that will sound effortless and
 464 not out of er a grammar text (.) book ah:
 465 but if not I just go to russia (xx) way to
 466 do it
 467 Alan: so do you have confidence in your
 468 russian teacher in this sense
 469 Fed: oh yes I do and this semester is also
 470 more than the first semester it's hm (.) I
 471 don't know (.) I mean it's always (.)

472 she's tougher so it looks like you are
 473 doing more and probably you are
 474 because I have learnt more in this
 475 semester than in the first one so (..) I
 476 guess she it is working
 477 Alan: and what do you think is different about
 478 this semester then? About this teacher
 479 perhaps?
 480 Fed: I don't know it's also that the first
 481 semester teacher was erm scary and
 482 ((laughs)) no it's useful erm; (...) you
 483 know you have to do something and (.)
 484 but then again the: er: slovak teacher is (.)
 485 as far from scary as you could get but
 486 still I want to do the homework and do it
 487 anyway
 488 Alan: hm
 489 Fed: but it's a different yeah yeah sure it's a
 490 different approach the one from slovak
 491 to russian because for russian I do all the
 492 homeworks and you study your lesson
 493 and you get up in the morning and
 494 you've done it and most likely not
 495 always in the best way but you have
 496 done what you could but for slovak
 497 sometimes I I (..) maybe I forget an
 498 exercise or I don't do that one because I
 499 don't know how to do it it's not (xx) for
 500 example when I'm at home I look for I
 501 don't know erm (...) slovak television
 502 and something like that it's erm (2.0) it's
 503 very different the russian still goes more
 504 on the book the other one go I kinda look
 505 for it more (..) it's I take the approach I

506 give to english for example in slovak (...)
 507 not exactly the same cos I don't know
 508 slovak enough well to listen to the: er: I
 509 don't know news and understand what
 510 they are actually talking about (x) I stay
 511 20 minutes at the computer listen to the
 512 news in slovak and try to (2.0)
 513 understand until (...) it's (weird) yeah
 514 (half I'd say well) fun
 515 Alan: you say you prefer more (.) you said you
 516 the the russian is better this year because
 517 do I understand it correctly you're more
 518 afraid of her?
 519 Fed: oh yes ((laughs)) no yes I'm (.) I don't
 520 know because she's actually I'm sure a
 521 lovely person and she's not like she: (3.0)
 522 well she will (2.0) not scream but you
 523 are close to it ((laughs)) but no she's
 524 actually a person but you get more of a:
 525 erm: you feel more that you have to do it
 526 yeah you more er what's the word the:
 527 (4.0) it's gone (I don't even know the
 528 word in italian) (xx) the: il dovere the:
 529 Alan: er the erm (2.0) the duty
 530 Fed: the duty yes you feel more of a (2.0)
 531 maybe she just puts us more pressure on
 532 it (...) er: you feel it more yes that's
 533 probably it (...)
 534 Alan: how does that come out in the classroom
 535 then ? I mean how does she make you
 536 feel [like
 537 Fed: [oh
 538 I've no idea (.)

539 it's probably just (2.0) also the fact that
 540 we have already spent we started from
 541 her and we studied with her and we had
 542 already studied 6 months and you get to
 543 studying you mm (.) we've finished with
 544 her I've done 9 months so or 10 what it
 545 is studying a language so you feel (2.0) I
 546 feel at least that i: didn't know enough
 547 for how much time I've spent learning it
 548 so you feel (.) more pressure er: studying
 549 and learning
 550 Alan: it's the same teacher as the first this?
 551 Fed: no
 552 Alan: oh it's different
 553 Fed: no it's different (..) er the one who does
 554 em: the letturato is is the same but the
 555 one who does the grammar no
 556 Alan: and this is the one who does the
 557 grammar
 558 Fed: yep
 559 Alan: yeah and is there a particular was she
 560 asks questions? That makes you feel
 561 more:
 562 Fed: m: (3.0) I don't know she probably it's
 563 also the fact that she's italian (.) so she
 564 has learnt it ((laughs)) so it's a: (.) it can
 565 get less er y- you know the first day it
 566 was for us russian so: she does know
 567 russian because she is russian this one
 568 has started she's like 28 (.) no probably
 569 she is older ma: I don't know she looks
 570 very older but I don't know how actually
 571 younger than how she looks er:: (..) so y-
 572 you: I guess that puts a: (.) more a:

573 pressure because she has done it so she
 574 knows (.) and she has done it here so she
 575 knows erm (..) well we should have
 576 learned by now and hopefully she
 577 remembers what we should learn by now
 578 and er we can learn so if she tells you
 579 that this is what you have to study for
 580 this lesson (.) for this month or whatever
 581 (.) you: kinda think yes I have to do it
 582 and this (2.0) I should manage to do
 583 Alan: hm m (..)
 584 Fed: probably yes
 585 Alan: so one of the influencing factors is the
 586 fact that she is italian
 587 Fed: yes yes and it's also an influential factor
 588 on the explaining part of the plan part of
 589 the lesson so it's a short part of the
 590 lesson the explaining it for her but it's
 591 erm a little bit more clear because she's
 592 talking actually italian (and we) can
 593 understand what she's saying (2.0) and=
 594 Alan: =not like
 595 Fed: no not like the first one no (.) no: not like
 596 no: (...)
 597 Alan: cos the first term was a russian teacher?
 598 Explaining in italian but
 599 Fed: yeah (.) or: or: some pieces in russian
 600 and go figure there's there's three
 601 months what I knew in russian ((laughs))
 602 to understand an explanation yes it was a
 603 little bit unsettling because while she
 604 was talking italian you didn't really
 605 understand what she was saying and
 606 when she was talking in russian I: didn't

607 really understand what she was saying (.)
 608 so it's more clear this 6 months (3.0)
 609 Alan: and what do you think about your future
 610 as an interpreter now? have you (.)
 611 thought about it again (.) reformulated
 612 your:
 613 Fed: not really I don't know erm: (..) I still I
 614 kinda think I'm liking the mediation (xx)
 615 but I don't think you can really eat on
 616 mediations (..)((laughs)) no: it's a fun
 617 part (xx) in english and it's funny (.) it's
 618 fun but erm: (..) you're not quite sure
 619 you can erm: (2.0) live only on
 620 mediations and er: (.) still like the idea of
 621 interpreting (..) I'm not sure how erm:
 622 (2.0) I'm not sure (I can do it) for the 30
 623 days a y- month 30 days a month
 624 Alan: yeah
 625 Fed: er: I would rather probably combine the
 626 2 things (.) cos it's erm: it's more than a
 627 natural job than interpreting ((laughs))
 628 it's more er::: (..) probably er tiring also
 629 er at least from what I've done now
 630 mediations (have all been) kinda fun er
 631 sure if you have to mediate a contract it's
 632 not quite (2.0) laughs and er: stuff like
 633 that still it's a more personal approach to
 634 it and I think I'd rather like yes
 635 Alan: hm (3.0) so erm: (..) you gave up
 636 medicine obviously things (...) changed
 637 Fed: quite a bit yes
 638 Alan: when you look back how do you=
 639 Fed: =no:: (2.0) I do not regret it ((laughs))
 640 Alan: no?

641 Fed: no: no no no and also because I'm still
642 going out with my friends from med
643 school and I really don't regret it (.) erm
644 Alan: why?
645 Fed: because i::: had problems with the a:::
646 subjects of the first year and the second
647 year but more or less the first year really
648 (...) and: I know what they are doing
649 now on the third year and it's (.) the the
650 classes I hated more: in subjects I hated
651 more (.) repeats repeat themselves (xx)
652 in the second year do physiology and er:
653 and er: I don't know in the third year you
654 have erm: semiotica or stuff like that so
655 UTTERLY boring and and erm: it's like
656 doing the: learning by heart of this er
657 university but without the logics part
658 ((laughs)) there's a lot a lot of learning
659 by heart a:nd erm: without the: more:
660 (2.0) fun part of the learning the
661 language (.)
662 Alan: language or medicine now? you're
663 talking about
664 Fed: them 2 in the medicine you have some
665 logics because a part of it is physical
666 science so you have to (...) develop
667 something you have a: I don't know a: (.)
668 erm: (3.0) a rule about erm: (...) a
669 thought we have to follow to understand
670 something which in this university you
671 really kinda don't because you have to
672 learn to speak it and understand and how
673 are: erm (an atomic bonding is forming)
674 how the atoms er these presence have in

675 the space but (.) you have it's a different
676 kinda reasoning it's less logical here but
677 then again there there's also a huge
678 chunk of learning by heart (.) just
679 learning by heart and remember it not by
680 half or a couple of months (.) so just
681 learning by heart

682 Alan: hm m

683 Fed: for ever (.) which is really boring

684 Alan: yeah

685 Fed: yeah and I'd really have some learning
686 by heart here but the rest aside is (.)
687 more fun

688 Alan: yeah (.) when you were talking in the
689 first interview you talked about your
690 father's company

691 Fed: hm m

692 Alan: which he inherited from his father (.) and
693 the problems the company (.) had and
694 the: I think I think you said your father (.)
695 did ask you whether you went into
696 medicine or you were interested in
697 medicine because of the problems that
698 [he had

699 Fed: [yes

700 He asked me if i: didn't like economy I
701 never thought about studying er er
702 economy because of him (.) and I told
703 him not and I still kinda think I didn't
704 but I still kinda think that I didn't do it
705 erm: consciously but probably
706 subconsciously I did saw that it was a
707 hell of a boring job and er with a lot of er:

708 (...) problems (.) which I wouldn't really
 709 want (.) and erm
 710 Alan: cos he wanted you to go into economics?
 711 Was that it?
 712 Fed: no no (.) no no he doesn't push me he
 713 asked me if it was his fault I never I
 714 never consider studying economics (.)
 715 because neither me and my sister EVER
 716 thought of going studying in the faculty
 717 of economics but like never ever even in
 718 a slightest idea I chose here I chose
 719 literature because I really didn't want to
 720 do the economics and a law exam and
 721 also actually the history one and but
 722 sorry yes well that that part was not my:
 723 (.) piece of cake (.) and I know I should
 724 (.) in myself I know I should do as an
 725 optional the economics exam but I really
 726 ((laughs)) think I'm gonna have to fight
 727 to do it because I think it's utterly boring
 728 and er: (:) just boring a:nd he he
 729 wondered if was seeing him having
 730 problems with the: company and stuff he
 731 does make me reject that idea of a job
 732 and it w- it probably is (.) er::: but f: now
 733 it's been almost a year now something
 734 he's been working in this other company
 735 and I still don't think I would ever do
 736 what he does it's (3.0) I really don't see
 737 myself in it
 738 Alan: yeah (.) and how do your parents look at
 739 you now? studying in (.) moving from
 740 medicine to [(xx)
 741 Fed: [well

742 My mother is still erm: terrorized I am
 743 going to have another breakdown and er:
 744 escape also this university erm of course
 745 she doesn't say it because she's afraid
 746 that's gonna make true (xx) she's a
 747 doctor who actually (xx needs a) rational
 748 mind to do it ((laughs)) but er my fa:ther
 749 (...) I guess that he's happy I think he:
 750 (...) he: I think he does give some credit
 751 to my mother's worries but also he
 752 thinks she's (...) quite exaggerating as
 753 she actually is because erm (2.0) I smoke
 754 and I: I bite my nails and chew things
 755 and I've been doing (.) I've I've been
 756 biting my nails since I was I think three
 757 and I had (.) teeth but she think that
 758 that's er because I'm agitated I'm really
 759 worried for the university and
 760 Alan: hm
 761 Fed: which doesn't really have I've been
 762 smoking for 6 years and I was in high
 763 school when I started and she doesn't
 764 know that but erm she thinks I smoke
 765 because I'm agitated I'm worried for the
 766 university and she can more or less think
 767 everything is (here xx) worried about the
 768 university er: so: she is exaggerating but
 769 he does I think give us some (fresh)
 770 kinda beliefs he er: still (a worrying
 771 matter) (xxx) it's it's useless to try to
 772 convince her that I'm not (.) quite that
 773 worried because she would keep
 774 thinking I am so

775 Alan: the reason why she should think you
 776 might be in danger so to speak?
 777 Fed: (2.0) not (in my:) ((laughs)) not that I
 778 know ((laughs))
 779 Alan: hm
 780 Fed: er yes yes I know (.) I guess she doesn't
 781 want me to ending up not having at least
 782 a degree and m: er something so she
 783 er:m or or a job (.) er: so I think she's
 784 more worried that I'm er. (.) if i: don't
 785 manage to do this er and I and if I don't
 786 manage to do this I won't start another
 787 university because the third (come on)
 788 ((laughs)) would be kinda ridiculous
 789 ((laughs))
 790 Alan: hm
 791 Fed: er:: and she thinks er:: if I stop I can
 792 have no future (...) she's a mother she's
 793 supposed to worry
 794 Alan: hm (...) what does she think about you
 795 leaving medicine to come to SSLMIT for
 796 example did she=
 797 Fed: =oh she would never say anything wrong
 798 (.) she's too scared ((laughs)) no I think
 799 she's too scared for that I would take it
 800 that I would take it wrong and er er:m
 801 and this to tell me anything but I think
 802 she's happy (.)
 803 Alan: hm (...)
 804 Fed: I think (.) yes (...) I hope she doesn't
 805 think it would be (would have been
 806 better) and I she has told me more than
 807 once that I (.) could have finished
 808 medicine but I i:: answered her that I

809 couldn't that I could have done it but I
 810 didn't want to and so I wouldn't er so I
 811 think she's happy (...) she's not happy (.)
 812 with me leaving in september but
 813 ((laughs))
 814 Alan: leaving in september?
 815 Fed: I I have the 6 month in erasmus
 816 Alan: oh of course
 817 Fed: (xx) she's not happy about that but er:m
 818 I am so ((laughs))
 819 Alan: you are going to?
 820 Fed: er: in slovakia (to xx) cos I won the that
 821 was funny I won the I won london (2.0)
 822 but er: (...) in in england there was
 823 double the people first er:: compared to
 824 the: er: places you could go
 825 Alan: yeah
 826 Fed: so ah (and also) I study slovak and
 827 russian slovak though (was only in
 828 london) and russian was more or
 829 less in half of the cities of course (with
 830 the one with) russian was exeter with 15
 831 people asking for it or bristol (.) 20
 832 people ask in there and er I didn't I don't
 833 have (great) grades really (.) so I thought
 834 there was no possibility me for me to get
 835 in I don't know 26 the average ((out of
 836 30 in the italian grading system)) and
 837 there's people who have 30 plus which I
 838 thought was a grade not an average
 839 because people only get 30 plus in
 840 exams
 841 Alan: wow

842 Fed: yeah ((laughs)) and it was a it was a girl
 843 from the second year for GOD'S SAKE
 844 do you sleep?
 845 Alan: ((laughs)) and er:m so I I chose to go
 846 away to slovakia (.) and er: (.) wh- which
 847 I'm happy with because i:'m (2.0) I may
 848 end up actually learning slovak (.) and er:
 849 it costs a lot less than england but then I
 850 won the seat for the place for london (..) because I've 10 credits they gave me
 851 from med school so I think that (.) put
 852 me up but london was for 9 months and I
 853 could only stay away 6 months because
 854 of this second term we had translation
 855 from italian into russian (.) and I have to
 856 be here actually I I don't need just the
 857 exam er validated and whatever (.) I
 858 have to learn and do it and study for it (.)
 859 I have to be here so I would have needed
 860 to shorten the: erasmus (.) but I couldn't
 861 for credits and stuff like that (.) and also
 862 they had made a mistake with the gradu-
 863 with the list (.) so there was a girl that
 864 should have gotten in but she hadn't and
 865 it was naturally my problem because I
 866 was the first it should have been the
 867 problem of the second girl but she had
 868 already accepted so they called me a
 869 couple of times so tell me so: you are
 870 going to (nitra) you tell me ((mimics
 871 high interested tone)) and I said no I
 872 have some problems but if I solve them
 873 I'm going to london oh yes but you
 874 know nitra is rea:lly good choice ((again

876 mimics high tone voice)) it's a really
 877 place you know studying yes but I want
 878 to go to london((laughs)) and er I
 879 realised that if I had any slightest
 880 problem they wouldn't have helped me (.)
 881 and er since I started from problems it
 882 really wasn't smart to keep trying for
 883 london so I (.) I gave up london and I
 884 took slovakia (.)
 885 Alan: hm
 886 Fed: and I'm happy with it
 887 Alan: right (.) and why is your mother unhappy
 888 you said she's not [very happy
 889 Fed: [cos I'm going away
 890 for 6 months she is italian after all
 891 Alan: ah
 892 Fed: oh and also because I want to go to the
 893 dormitory of the university (.) which
 894 costs 83 euros a:: a month it's er: like
 895 (...) to me it's not even a question and
 896 also it's next to the university there's
 897 people and there's a canteen so if you
 898 don't want to cook you can go just there
 899 and eat and think that's erm the easiest
 900 way (.) but she's afraid the kitchen is
 901 going to be dirty (.) that the people in the
 902 room won't be: er I don't know what?
 903 whatever (xxx) just sleep in the room it's
 904 not like er so she's she's a mother so
 905 she's worried (.) and she's complaining
 906 and she's already decided in 2 mon- in 6
 907 months she's coming 2 times (.) which I
 908 already I don't want her to be there and
 909 still I'm not there ((laughs)) help (.)

910 please (.) she wants to but an i-phone so
 911 just she can call me via skype even if
 912 she's not home (.)
 913 Alan: hm (3.0) she's
 914 Fed: she's being more italian than she's ever
 915 been in her whole life and (.)
 916 Alan: hm
 917 Fed: er
 918 Alan: why do you think this is?
 919 Fed: ah because my sister has never gone out
 920 from within a holiday and she doesn't
 921 even actually want to and the: i: actually
 922 do (.) want to leave not only for 6
 923 months if it was for me a.nd er: then she
 924 is worried about the university and if I
 925 (am agitated or depressed or whatever)
 926 and I won't be here (.) and er she doesn't
 927 know how to work the vc (vcr) so you
 928 know ((laughs)) she's (xxx) for these
 929 kinds of stupid things and I won't be at
 930 home under her protecting wing and I
 931 don't know whatever (.) and anything
 932 else that could happen in slovakia I mean
 933 I'm not going in kuwait to (..) aid dying
 934 soilders I mean it's europe (xx) (it's stuff
 935 she's worried about)
 936 Alan: right (.) cos you have one sister yes?
 937 Fed: yeah
 938 Alan: and [she's young
 939 Fed: [older
 940 Alan: older than you?
 941 Fed: older (.) three years
 942 Alan: three years older (.) what does she do?

943 Fed: er: she studied language in bologna and
944 now she's doing her dissertation about
945 erm (3.0) erm communication or stuff
946 something like that (I don't know really
947 know the) precise names (xxxxxxx)
948 she's more or less done
949 Alan: right
950 Fed: but she doesn't want to leave so
951 ((laughs))
952 Alan: oh ok (.) so your mother's more worried
953 about you
954 Fed: yes (.) she's more worried about her
955 getting a job for that she should worry
956 more but er than me leaving really
957 ((laughs)) (3.0)
958 Alan: great ok (.) that's fantastic we'll stop
959 there

Maria 2: Second interview.

1 Alan: so marta you've come to the end of your
2 second term

3 Maria: yes

4 Alan: I just want you to give me some of your
5 thoughts and impressions about you
6 know about your experiences (.) here

7 Maria: ah it's getting (.) better (.) better and
8 better

9 Alan: hm

10 Maria: I just lo:ve the way things are working
11 out and (.) I enjoy (.) all the things that I
12 am doing here

13 Alan: hm

14 Maria: so I'm enjoying I'm really much
15 enjoying the Italian literature course
16 we've been having it was great (.) and it
17 felt like being at university finally
18 because sometimes (.) in the first
19 semester some of the courses were like a
20 little bit too simple? And it felt like
21 being at high school (.) and I'm down on
22 high school I've been there 5 years and
23 that's enough but now it really seem like
24 being at university and we are treated
25 like equal (.) of course we are students
26 but we have a good deal of respect an:d
27 that's amazing that's what I was looking
28 for (.) a:nd even in Russian we (.) we are
29 expected to know a lot a:nd (..) the we
30 don't spend time we don't waste time on
31 people who haven't studied and so don't

32 know things that should be our basis (.)
 33 and that's good I mean (.) i: (.) I
 34 wouldn't mind like having a review or
 35 revision together with the other people
 36 but if I decided to do it and we all
 37 decided to do it not if one person isn't
 38 hasn't studied is behind everybody else
 39 Alan: hm m
 40 Maria: we have to stop the lesson (.) while it did
 41 happen in the first semester a lot (.) for
 42 one or two per- persons people a:nd so I
 43 really feel like being (...) at uni
 44 Alan: hm m
 45 Maria: a:nd that is really good (..)
 46 Alan: so just to understand more what do you
 47 mean by this year this term feels more
 48 like university? How would you ?
 49 Maria: erm (...) it feels like I I left high school
 50 for ever
 51 Alan: hm
 52 Maria: so: I can look for help in for a teacher so
 53 I can ask him but (.) it's my problem it's
 54 not his so he's not doing his work good
 55 he is I am not
 56 Alan: hm m
 57 Maria: and that is the difference with high
 58 school and university so (.) if I'm not
 59 ready it's my problem it's not the
 60 teacher's problem it's not the class's
 61 problem
 62 Alan: hm m
 63 Maria: a:nd (.) that is good because it make you
 64 feel more a lot more responsibilities (.)
 65 and you: you are responsible for what

66 you are doing and for what you are not
67 doing
68 Alan: hm m
69 Maria: so: (.) it's good because you know
70 exactly how you are doing and how you
71 are supposed to do and what exactly you
72 are getting from it
73 Alan: hm m
74 Maria: so (.) it's good
75 Alan: cos I remember you saying I think in the
76 (.) group interview if I'm not mistaken
77 that you were worried that there might
78 not be a quite clear method (.) erm said
79 there was a little bit of confusion (.)
80 Maria: yeah I thought at the beginning there was
81 in in some lessons there still is a bit of
82 confusion we have different teachers
83 teaching the same (.) class
84 Alan: hm m
85 Maria: and they use different methods and we
86 don't know which one to rely on because
87 sometimes there are some discrepancies
88 between them like (.) quite a big one (.)
89 so we don't really know who to rely but
90 (.) I think at this point we know (..) how
91 to (..) how to manage it because we are
92 (.) we have (..) been presented with our
93 responsibilities we know what we are
94 supposed to do (.) and we are able to
95 decide between (.) 2 methods which are
96 not wrong but they are different between
97 one another and we can choose which
98 one suits us better (.) and so I think that
99 is what university should prepare you for

100 Alan: hm m

101 Maria: cos of course I'm going to meet a lot of

102 different people who decide to work in a

103 different way (.) and it doesn't mean my

104 way is wrong it just means that I can

105 correct it or can take something from

106 another method and use it and make it

107 mine

108 Alan: hm m

109 Maria: and that what was (mething) what was

110 missing at the beginning (.) I wasn't we

111 weren't prepared for that

112 Alan: hm m (.) is that a specific language or in

113 general

114 Maria: I'd say in translation and in mediation

115 for English

116 Alan: English to: ?

117 Maria: English to Italian and (.) yeah because

118 we in both translation and mediation we

119 had (for) like 2 different teachers and 3

120 different teachers

121 Alan: hm m

122 Maria: and there was a bit (..) confusion (.)

123 confusing at the beginning

124 Alan: hm

125 Maria: but now it's better (.)

126 Alan: were there any contradictions ? that were

127 difficult to resolve

128 Maria: hm not ((exhales)) not contradictions in

129 the method the method was quite similar

130 (.) but in the topics that we were

131 presented with and in the: in the exam

132 prepa- preparation

133 Alan: hm

134 Maria: ah: for example with professor rutland (.)
 135 we: like analysed like instructions but it
 136 was (.) really detailed so it was about
 137 something we don't even know we don't
 138 even know what it is in Italian it was all
 139 about all different types of screws a:nd
 140 erm (.) panels and hm wires and that's
 141 great
 142 Alan: hm
 143 Maria: but I think it was a little bit too much and
 144 if it wasn't we should have spent more
 145 time and we should have done it the
 146 same with the professor infanti (.) cos
 147 with her we did instructions and it was
 148 like (.) open the bottle take the tap out
 149 and pour the water put the top back on (.)
 150 so it was really simple and so we know
 151 that this this is really big topic but we
 152 haven't (..) we didn't take it in the same
 153 way: we were: they were on total
 154 different side and it was really confusing
 155 because we don't know what to expect at
 156 the exam (...) a:nd we talk a lot about
 157 erm: source text and parallel text (...)
 158 but only with professor rutland (.)
 159 because with professerresa infanti we
 160 only talk about them in erm: in
 161 instructions and tourism (..) so (..) I
 162 don't think that i: like we knew that (.)
 163 professerresa infanti didn't really want to
 164 share her course that she didn't want it at
 165 all (..) and it was like we were (..)
 166 prevented we were prevented from (..)
 167 understanding and really taking from

168 professor rutland what he was trying to
 169 give us
 170 Alan: hm
 171 Maria: because there was this confliction
 172 between them (..) these conflicts
 173 between them
 174 Alan: can can you give me an example of (.)
 175 that?
 176 Maria: erm: like for the for the exam infanti said
 177 oh I've prepared it in November so: he's
 178 not gonna be able to say anything about
 179 it (.) a:nd I know he wanted to do
 180 something like a new topic something
 181 we haven't done in class
 182 Alan: hm m
 183 Maria: while I think that the topic should be
 184 between among those we have tried a:nd
 185 those you have seen so tour- tourism
 186 geography ahmm instructions and (.)
 187 something else (...) and (.) and even for
 188 the corrections they said we don't know
 189 we maybe are going to split them and
 190 that's it
 191 Alan: hm m
 192 Maria: now you can't because I've taken a
 193 course with both of you (.) so it's not
 194 fair if you only correct a half of our
 195 exams and the other one corrects the
 196 other half
 197 Alan: hm m
 198 Maria: it's not equal (..) and like we knew they
 199 didn't really want wanted to work
 200 together so it was like (...) a bit (.) odd
 201 Alan: hm

202 Maria: going from one class to another you
 203 didn't want to say oh but professor run-
 204 rutland said to say said to do this (.) cos
 205 she said yeah but I don't think that's a
 206 good idea
 207 Alan: hm
 208 Maria: what am I supposed to do? I'm gonna
 209 take what I need from both of you and
 210 that's it
 211 Alan: hm (.) how did you interpret this?
 212 Maria: hm (...) erm: i: didn't like it (.) this is
 213 something that reminded me of high
 214 school
 215 Alan: hm
 216 Maria: teachers have problems of course they
 217 have they're people (.) but (..) it's not
 218 my problem so you should get a long
 219 with it and I should (..) but without you
 220 saying me (.) what's your problem?
 221 Alan: hm
 222 Maria: we're not friends
 223 Alan: hm
 224 Maria: it's not what we're meant to be (.) we are
 225 meant to be student and professor
 226 Alan: hm m
 227 Maria: that is it (.)
 228 Alan: so she to- [she told
 229 Maria: [she told us (.)
 230 in the class oh I'm not happy I have to
 231 split my course and I didn't want too (.)
 232 ok (.) ((small laugh)) I don't care sorry
 233 (..) so yeah that was a bit odd (...)
 234 Alan: yeah it sounds erm it sounds confusing

235 Maria: it does (.) an: and the topics they
 236 analysed were really different so (.) we
 237 don't know what to expect at the exam
 238 because we know professorresa infanti
 239 prepared it but we don't know if
 240 professor rutland accepted it (.) or if he's
 241 gonna decide to do something different
 242 (..) and we don't know the way they are
 243 going to correct it (.) so
 244 Alan: right so there's confusion about=
 245 Maria: =yeah
 246 Alan: the whole [modality of the exam
 247 Maria: [yes yes
 248 definitely
 249 Alan: and how does that make you think or
 250 feel?
 251 Maria: ah: I think I'll just do some more
 252 translation and then I'll stick with my
 253 method cos it seems good for both of
 254 them I think it works for me
 255 Alan: hm
 256 Maria: so (.) I'll stick with it
 257 Alan: right (..) hmm so that that's the source of
 258 tension there then
 259 Maria: it is (.) yes I think English was the most
 260 problematic language this year
 261 Alan: [hm
 262 Maria:[it (wasn't?) really done the way I was
 263 expecting to I don't think I have lear:nt
 264 that much this year
 265 Alan: hm
 266 Maria: the first (course) the first semester the:
 267 st- professor steedman's course was
 268 definitely the thing we needed but we

269 had needed this ye- this semester too cos
 270 we're not (.) we are good but we're not
 271 that good
 272 Alan: hm
 273 Maria: a:nd we need to practice it (.) every year
 274 Alan: hm (.) what does he do again?
 275 Maria: grammar
 276 Alan: hm
 277 Maria: so all the prepositions a:nd how (.) which
 278 is the better way to say something or to
 279 transform a sentence if we don't know
 280 how to say it
 281 Alan: hm
 282 Maria: and to use different words in different
 283 ways (..) and like all the difference
 284 between on the other hand (.) in fact
 285 Alan: hm
 286 Maria: er: definitely (.) finally (.) ah eventually
 287 Alan: hm
 288 Maria: and that is important because we (.)
 289 we're getting english from (..) er TV
 290 shows and TV series and music and
 291 they're not always talking (.) properly
 292 Alan: hm
 293 Maria: or perfect english or standard english so
 294 we we really need to work more on that
 295 Alan: hm (..) but you said at the beginning it's
 296 getting better and better and that[(xx)
 297 Maria: [it is
 298 it is cos it's way: more interesting than
 299 what it was at the beginning (.) because
 300 we have started to do mediation and
 301 Alan: hm

302 Maria: it's amazing and in Russian is so: scary (..)
 303 because you are taught really fast but you
 304 realise you are understanding what they
 305 are saying it's such a satisfaction
 306 Alan: hm
 307 Maria: and so it is getting better
 308 Alan: yeah (.) so Russian what's Russian like
 309 this year? (xx)
 310 Maria: hm quite rough
 311 Alan: hm
 312 Maria: it's really big a:nd sometimes it seems
 313 you're never gonna understand it
 314 because there are so: many differences
 315 and (.) if you (..) use a variation like in
 316 the verb it means something completely
 317 different (.) because of the intention so if
 318 you say I'm going you have to specify
 319 whether you are going by foot or by
 320 transport and if you are going but you
 321 have the intentions to come back or if
 322 you are coming back
 323 Alan: hm m (..)
 324 Maria: and so it makes you (.) think about your
 325 language
 326 Alan: hm m
 327 Maria: in Italian I can lie in every way I don't
 328 have a problem with that (.) because I
 329 can just miss some details and that's it
 330 I'm not actually (lying) but I am (.)
 331 while in Russian I couldn't (...) a:nd (.)
 332 it just makes you understand how (.)
 333 difficult a language can be
 334 Alan: hm m

335 Maria: and (.) I admit I didn't think there was a
 336 difference a: language more difficult
 337 than italian
 338 Alan: hm
 339 Maria: cos I know Italian is really difficult and
 340 it makes me understand more of my
 341 language and I find a lot of similarities
 342 between them
 343 Alan: hm
 344 Maria: and I find a lot of similarities between
 345 Russian and Chinese actually (.) and (...)
 346 it it really makes you feel like (..) a flea
 347 Alan: hm
 348 Maria: you're nothing (..) compared to this
 349 language but you are studying to get a
 350 little bit bigger every day and everyday
 351 you learn something more and (.) you
 352 get a little bit more confident
 353 Alan: hmm: so it gets better (.) but sometimes
 354 it's just so: disappointing (.) because (..)
 355 you don't get it (.) from the beginning
 356 you have to study hard for that (..)
 357 you say a flea (.) how do you interpret
 358 that?
 359 Maria: like a small little flea that sees the
 360 mountains and says oh my god and I
 361 have to go on the other side
 362 Alan: hm
 363 Maria: so it will take a long time but eventually
 364 I will get there
 365 Alan: hm mm (.) you also said that you were
 366 very interested in different cultures
 367 Maria: ye:s (..) ye::s
 368 Alan: yes

369 Maria: I am starting to understand some of the
 370 things of Russian people and some and I
 371 am really looking forward to understand
 372 Chinese (.) cos it's so different and (..) I
 373 know I am not understanding chinese
 374 right now because I am still thinking in
 375 (pinen) which is the way they transcribe
 376 characters so it's with letters but it's not
 377 the way they think they're thinking with
 378 images
 379 Alan: hm m
 380 Maria: and that's amazing and I think it is so
 381 different from our form our way to think
 382 Alan: hmm
 383 Maria: and I am really trying to (.) think the way
 384 they could (.) the way I think they do
 385 Alan: hm m
 386 Maria: so with images and not words (.) so it's
 387 completely inverted the way I do now(.)
 388 Alan: hm
 389 Maria: and that's what is interesting me the
 390 most in this moment
 391 Alan: hm (.)
 392 Maria:[and
 393 Alan: [how does that work ? thinking in
 394 images
 395 Maria: thinking in images because if you think
 396 if I say the words school you see the
 397 words school you know (.) if you think
 398 the word school you see s.c.h.o.o.l.
 399 ((spells it out)) that's what you see (.)
 400 while they see (.) a character which is a
 401 picture (..) and it's not a picture of the
 402 school but is a picture which is (.) which

403 takes the place of the word (.) and so if
 404 you're talking in Chinese you should see
 405 a lot of images and not the words
 406 Alan: h hm
 407 Maria: and I think that's amazing (.) so
 408 completely different from our way to
 409 think
 410 Alan: is that what the Chinese teacher told you
 411 or-
 412 Maria: no (.) it's what I think they do
 413 Alan: h hm
 414 Maria: because when I write I write in (pinin)
 415 but I should write a characters because
 416 that's what what I am supposed to see
 417 when I talk Chinese
 418 Alan: h hm
 419 Maria: because there are a lot of different
 420 characters but sometimes they are
 421 pronounced the same way with the same
 422 tone so (.) if yous- if you just spell it it's
 423 not the same you don't get the same
 424 meaning
 425 Alan: h hm
 426 Maria: you have to write the characters (..) and
 427 that's
 428 Alan: h hm
 429 Maria: great
 430 ((researcher laughs))
 431 Alan: and you also sort of like the different
 432 cultural (.) sort of ways of doing things
 433 you said
 434 Maria: yeah
 435 Alan: and the differences between cultures

436 Maria: yes and I am trying to understand a little
 437 bit more but they're (..) quite a different
 438 (..) quite a difficult people to reach
 439 Alan: h hm
 440 Maria: so everytime I try to speak a little more
 441 with Chinese people (..) for example at
 442 the shop the:: happy shop I think it's
 443 called
 444 Alan: h hm
 445 Maria: and I go there and instead of saying (.)
 446 grazie I say (xx) ((Chinese for thank
 447 you)) and he answers me and it's such a
 448 big joy: because he understand what I
 449 am saying (.) and so I think this is the
 450 way to start a little bit more to know
 451 them
 452 Alan: h hm
 453 Maria: because they are really happy to share
 454 their culture but they are really closed (.)
 455 in our (.) they're really closed (.) they
 456 feel (.) they are different (.) while
 457 they're not
 458 Alan: h hm
 459 Maria: they're just (.) from another country it
 460 doesn't make them different (.) and it's
 461 really difficult to talk with Russian
 462 people because those that are here are
 463 only here for travel tourism and hm
 464 entertainment (.) and the few erasmus
 465 I've met that are from Russia (2.0) they
 466 they are (.) they do want to talk about
 467 their country but (.) it's not like they're
 468 that open it's not like me when I talk
 469 about Italy when I am away (..) they're

470 always saying oh it's different if you (.)
 471 you don't realise that it's different (.) it's
 472 like I have to go there to get to know a
 473 little bit more (..) and so: I am looking
 474 forward to go there in the third year
 475 Alan: h hm (..) so they say that it is different
 476 but they don't actually say how?
 477 Maria: they do like but I I they say if you're not
 478 there you can't really understand like I
 479 can tell you that (.) I don't know the
 480 hairdresser is open 24/8 24/7 (.) but until
 481 you until are until you are there and you
 482 actually see it and you go cut your hair
 483 at three o'clock in the morning you don't
 484 realise it
 485 Alan: h hm
 486 Maria: because it seems so far away and
 487 impossible and nobody would do it here
 488 Alan: h hm these are the students or also the
 489 teachers that say these things?
 490 Maria: ah this is students and er the the teachers
 491 when they are talking about Moscow
 492 they say it's (.) y- you cannot realise
 493 how big it is and I have been I have been
 494 living in really big cities like Sydney and
 495 it has 5 millions people living it
 496 Alan: h hm
 497 Maria: but then I think of Moscow and it has 12
 498 and a half million people living in it and
 499 it doesn't have skyscrapers oh like a few
 500 it does just getting bigger and bigger
 501 because it has so much space and if you
 502 take the underground (..) it takes an hour
 503 to get from the end of one line to the

504 cen- to the city centre not even to the
 505 end to of the same line (..) and I can't
 506 think of it (.) I think (.) it doesn't take
 507 me an hour to go from Milan to turin
 508 Alan: h hm (.)
 509 Maria: I can I cannot imagine how big that place
 510 can be and how different it can be
 511 Alan: h hm
 512 Maria: even living there because (.) during the
 513 winter you shouldn't walk next to the
 514 buildings because if a block of ice comes
 515 down you die you dead and a lot of
 516 people of die in this way (.) and I can't
 517 think of it
 518 Alan: h hm
 519 Maria: of course there is (.) like a risk of a snow
 520 coming down or ice coming down but
 521 the most you get a headache you don't
 522 die for that (.) in the city
 523 Alan: a ha
 524 Maria: and so I am: I think they are right when
 525 they say if you don't go there (..) you
 526 cannot really understand it (.) but I
 527 think it's the same with every single
 528 country not just with Russia (..) I can tell
 529 you that naples is amazing but if you go
 530 if you don't go there you don't realise
 531 how much it is (..) and so: I just I was
 532 actually hoping to find a: (.) an erasmus
 533 or an overseas (.) er scholarship in
 534 Vladivostok which is (.) far far away
 535 ((semi comic very high pitched tone))
 536 next to china (..) I don't think there are
 537 Alan: it's a long long way away

538 Maria: hm mm

539 Alan: why so far?

540 Maria: because I would be (.) in Russia but I

541 would be really close to china and I

542 could go and visit both of the countries

543 Alan: h hm

544 Maria: not Moscow maybe

545 Alan: you chose these languages because: ?

546 Maria: (.) I I find them interesting (.) I I wasn't

547 really sure of chinese actually I wanted

548 to take Portuguese and then I went to see

549 a lesson at the beginning of the first

550 semester to take it as a second language

551 and I fell in love with it (.) i: loved the

552 sounds and (.) I just (.) it makes me

553 happy (.) to study it and because i: (.) it

554 does have a lot of sense in it (.) it's not

555 like some science and that's it it does

556 have a really big story (.) it's really

557 impor- important what you want to say

558 and it takes it goes really (..) er: back in

559 the old days (.) like three thousand years

560 ago (...) the same way my language

561 does as it comes from (.) greek (.)

562 Alan: hm when you say story big story what

563 do you mean by that?

564 Maria: I mean that every time you take every

565 time you say a character (.) it does have

566 a story in it (.) so when you say the

567 characters school there is (.) a roof and

568 there's a child under it so you are

569 supposing that a child going to a place

570 that has a roof and it's sort of a home

571 because it's the way they used to teach

572 at home (.) and it's amazing (.) we we
 573 don't have the same thing here (.) or
 574 when you are saying (..) er: like er the
 575 word peace there is a roof and there is a
 576 woman under it so because it means that
 577 if a woman is at home everything fine
 578 everything is right
 579 Alan: [was this
 580 Maria: [it does makes sense)
 581 Alan: was this told to you or:
 582 Maria: yes it's the way that you can see it if you
 583 know the character (.) an:d you
 584 understand the meaning you can really
 585 understand why the meaning is that
 586 meaning (.) and light there is a sun and
 587 there is a moon (.) that is light (.) of
 588 course it is you're right why should I
 589 call it luce ((Italian for light))? (.) it does
 590 come from an old word but where does
 591 it come from does it describe something
 592 no but yours does (..) great
 593 Alan: yes
 594 Maria: yes
 595 Alan: is that how the teacher explains things in
 596 the classroom?
 597 Maria: yes some of the characters not all of
 598 them because they are divided but like
 599 the ideograms they come from the really
 600 old characters and that's what they are
 601 so (.) in order to make you understand
 602 why that thing means that she sh- she
 603 explains it to you (..)
 604 Alan: hm
 605 Maria: and it does make sense (..) so

606 Alan: yeah when you said erm when you were
 607 talking last time you (.) said that erm
 608 you were very interested in helping italy
 609 you said
 610 Maria: yes (.) we: are in a lot of troubles and we
 611 don't know how to deal with it we've
 612 always been in a lot of troubles but it
 613 was different we were divided we
 614 weren't in a single nation (..) we: (.) our
 615 government is falling to pieces we don't
 616 know what we want we don't know how
 617 to do it (.) and I think most of the time
 618 we we are saying so many things to a
 619 different coun- to a lot of different
 620 countries and they don't really match (.)
 621 and I think that if some people could
 622 explain the real culture and what they
 623 actually mean with one single word I
 624 think that would change our politics our
 625 foreign politics it would help italy to do
 626 something different
 627 Alan: all right
 628 Maria: or: with tourism we're not (..) yes we are:
 629 thinking about tourism it's one of our
 630 biggest thing but we aren't actually
 631 doing something for it (.) and if one
 632 could explain why? the whole world is
 633 coming to italy to see it and to
 634 experience it why it's so different from
 635 every single country in the world (.) I
 636 think that would make big difference
 637 and we would start having different type
 638 of politics for our country

639 Alan: hm m you you said you know you
640 thought your role as a future interpreter
641 might (.) facilitate this

642 Maria: I hope so

643 Alan: you still? (.)

644 Maria: yeah I still do so I think I would lo:ve to
645 work as an interpreter at the (.) I don't
646 know parliament European parliament of
647 course but I would prefer probably to
648 work (.) with (.) a company or in a
649 minister (..) with a minister a:nd help
650 them to understand the importance of
651 our culture and the importance of the
652 other cultures (.) so that we can help
653 each other (.) and we can build a better
654 future (.) because it's not going well at
655 all

656 Alan: hmm

657 Maria: and I don't want my sons to (.) to be
658 born and to grow in another country
659 because I'm really proud to be Italian
660 and I want them to be here (.) but I want
661 them to have a future and I want to have
662 (.) bright future (.) and not to say oh ok I
663 hope to get to the end of the month

664 Alan: hm

665 Maria: cos italy's not that (..) and it doesn't
666 deserve it

667 Alan: hm m (.)

668 Maria: and I think that (.) a lot of people who
669 are actually (ruling us) at this moment
670 they are hoping for italy to be a better
671 place but not for everybody just for
672 some of them (.) and it isn't fair and if

673 we if we should realise how tourism is
 674 important for us I think there would be a
 675 lot of place a lot of place for work and a
 676 lot of people would stop being
 677 disoccupied ((unemployed in Italian))
 678 because everybody loves italy but they
 679 don't realise how much they do (.) and
 680 in and in the way they could do it and
 681 the way that it could help italy to be a
 682 better country for everybody (..) so I
 683 would prefer to work in an environment
 684 that helps me that of course I can use
 685 languages because I would die without
 686 using them (.) but that I could use to
 687 make my country a better place
 688 Alan: hm m (.) better place? in what sen-
 689 Economically or in another [sense
 690 Maria: [better
 691 Place yeah of course economically
 692 would help but economically like (..)
 693 we're not we are in a crisis but we are
 694 not that bad we're getting a little bit
 695 better I I'd say
 696 Alan: hm m (.)
 697 Maria: but to have a better conscious of our
 698 country (.) because (..) we we are proud
 699 of being Italian but we forget it and we
 700 forget what we really have and we
 701 decide ok I want to go to London yes
 702 why? Oh because it's a beautiful city of
 703 course it's a beautiful city (.) and you are
 704 right but but we have beautiful cities in
 705 italy and if everyone keeps going away
 706 (..) we are going to loose it

707 Alan: hm m

708 Maria: because (..) we are not going to be able

709 to enjoy it (.) and whilst you're going to

710 be living in London and say oh i'll go

711 and visit italy one day you are Italian

712 what's the point?

713 Alan: hm m

714 Maria: so we should (..) help (.) build a better

715 conscious (..)

716 Alan: hm m when you were talking about the

717 dynamics in the classroom you said

718 there's a lot of competition but that you

719 found it er that it was relaxed and have

720 you stayed with the same opinion still?

721 Maria: hmm yeah there is a lot of competition (.)

722 a:nd (.) I think it's good there is cos

723 you're gonna find it in a working

724 environment there has to be competition

725 (.) a:nd (2.0) I think I still think it's (.)

726 it's not that bad everybody knows where

727 your strong point is and where you can

728 rely and where you cannot work that

729 hard because you're really good with

730 that but you know that you can help and

731 ask help can ask for help to the other

732 people (.) because they have different

733 strong point and that's where maybe

734 you're weak a:nd I think it's good like

735 with my friends I do like this and we

736 help each other with different things and

737 at the end we all equal

738 Alan: hm m

739 Maria: so we are helping but we are getting a lot

740 Alan: right and are you all friends together in
 741 the classroom or:?
 742 Maria: we are but like (.) more with other
 743 people like I know the people who live
 744 in bologna but I don't really hang out
 745 with because they live away in bologna
 746 or with the people from here from forli
 747 of course I know them but maybe I tend
 748 to hangout with er like valeria who she
 749 is living here cleilia which is living here
 750 and we go home for the weekends
 751 maybe I don't know we see each other
 752 during the weekend
 753 Alan: hm m
 754 Maria: because they're my new friends because
 755 I didn't know anybody when I came here
 756 and because we are taking same class
 757 and we rely on each other so if I am not
 758 coming to les- to school because I am
 759 sick I'm going to get your notes and
 760 vice-versa
 761 Alan: hm m
 762 Maria: so we are competitive between ourselves
 763 but not with marks we are competitive
 764 on other things (.) it's always on the
 765 level of knowing the language but (..)
 766 it's it's relaxed because we know that if
 767 I if I know if I realise that you know
 768 wa:y more Russian than I do (.) I'm
 769 gonna help you with English because
 770 you don't know as much as I do and
 771 you're gonna help me with Russian (.)
 772 and since we are taking mediation and
 773 translation where you can't really do it

774 alone and we're changing our roles and
 775 we're doing mediation so everybody
 776 said oh I would have said it that way oh
 777 that's great the way you said it can i?
 778 I'm going to write it down cos it's a
 779 good way to say it I wouldn't know that
 780 Alan: yeah (..)
 781 Maria: so it is competitive but it's good
 782 Alan: hm
 783 Maria: it needs to be
 784 Alan: hm m but actually in the live classroom
 785 th- th-
 786 Maria: the live cla- er: there are a couple of
 787 people in the whole (..) school that are (.)
 788 ((exhales)) that I can't stand sometimes
 789 because they they know a lot about the
 790 language but they want to show it like I
 791 have been studying Russian for 5 years
 792 at high school so of course I know more
 793 about it than you do (.) but it's not like if
 794 the teacher is writing something
 795 down oh yes I know it because it is blah
 796 blah blah ((imitates enthusiastic high
 797 pitched tone)) of course you know it you
 798 studied it what's the point of saying it (.)
 799 so there are 2 people in the whole (..)
 800 course that do it but (.) and nobody
 801 (stands) them when they do it but who
 802 cares
 803 Alan: nobody what?
 804 Maria: nobody ((exhales)) can stand them when
 805 they do it but (..) it's all right
 806 Alan: right

807 Maria: we all do it on somethings I do it on
 808 knitting needles and erm: crochet
 809 needles [it's different
 810 Alan: [sorry? ((small laugh))
 811 you do it on (x)
 812 Maria: in mediation when we were talking about
 813 (.) erm: forbidden item on the plane and
 814 we were talking about er: knitting
 815 needles and crochet? I think it is called
 816 Alan: hmm
 817 Maria: and we were talking with professor
 818 Bennett and professor a san giorgi and
 819 they said oh yeah I think it's the same
 820 NO ITS NOT ((laughs)) and I said it's
 821 not sorry it's different and I was the only
 822 one to know that and I explain it and I
 823 was really proud of myself for that (.)
 824 but well so everybody has his
 825 environments and everyone knows
 826 something and knows a lot about
 827 something so we together we know a lot
 828 about everything
 829 Alan: hmm
 830 Maria: and everybody's got his own (..) topic
 831 Alan: so when you did that in the classroom
 832 did you feel [(anybody)
 833 Maria: [no
 834 Like everyone was laughing like why
 835 would you know that a:nd so it's no' it's
 836 not really em: you don't feel stressed
 837 when you do it you just say ok I know it
 838 and I'm gonna explain it because it's
 839 something that needs to everybody
 840 because otherwise I should go home

841 maybe I forgot to do it and then I'll do it
 842 and then I made the exam and what's the
 843 difference why there is a difference a
 844 difference between them yes and
 845 somebody said it in class so it's useful (..)
 846 but not in Russian when you say oh yes I
 847 know it yeah (.) good for you
 848 Alan: hm (..) so er who does this yes I know it
 849 Maria: ah it's a guy from (.) from our own class
 850 I don't know I think he's taking (.)
 851 german as first language and so he's
 852 always asking oh could I say it with the
 853 other word ((high pitched excited tone))
 854 and nobody has ever heard that word
 855 like he looked for it on the dictionary
 856 and they say sometimes they say yes you
 857 can say that or sometimes they say no
 858 why would you use that word? Oh I
 859 look for it I looked it up in the dictionary
 860 ((same tone as previously)) but it doesn't
 861 make sense here (.) oh ok
 862 Alan: hm
 863 Maria: so we all get our little revenge and we're
 864 happy
 865 Alan: you get your revenge?
 866 Maria: yes (.) because sometimes they say no it
 867 doesn't make sense
 868 Alan: hm ((laughs)) (..)
 869 Maria: that's the point
 870 Alan: that's a point
 871 Maria: yes::
 872 Alan: is there a point system going on?

873 Maria: no that's the point like stop looking the
874 things up in the dictionary it doesn't (.)
875 always make sense

876 Alan: and why do you what do you think when
877 this person does this wh- what is your
878 opinion of

879 Maria: oh sometimes it's intres- it's intresting
880 and (.) necessary because he's (...)
881 making our dictionary bigger our vocab-
882 vocabulary bigger but sometimes you
883 jus- you know you want to show off and
884 somebody say ok stop it (.) yes:: thank
885 god somebody said it to him (.) stop it

886 Alan: right

887 Maria: and it was a teacher so it wasn't me and I
888 don't feel like I am a bad person

889 Alan: do you think there are there are show
890 offs then?

891 Maria: ehm really a few (.) some: (.) in Russian
892 there is only this guy because it's
893 Russian we've never done it before apart
894 from him and another girl and she's not
895 showing off (.) in English sometimes
896 there is a couple of person but they
897 doing like even in normal life it's the
898 way they behave so (.) it's not really
899 showing off (.) for them and we know:
900 they do it

901 Alan: what do you mean in normal life?

902 Maria: like there's this friend of mine giacom
903 the one who has a really beautiful
904 English accent (.) and ((laughs)) he's
905 like always doing it like here you're
906 saying a couple of words in Russia and

907 he says oh yes I know sbasiba ((mimics
 908 high toned excitement)) and he starts
 909 talking Russian even though he doesn't
 910 take Russian and you're I don't know
 911 you're speaking French oh yes I know ca
 912 va ca va ((mimics high toned
 913 excitement)) and he starts speaking
 914 French (.) he does it with every single
 915 language and he's really good with it
 916 and with theatre and with everything he
 917 does it with everything food wine beer
 918 everything so we know we i- it's the
 919 way he is he's not showing off (.) so we
 920 don't care (.) we all laugh about it
 921 Alan: right (.) but there are people perhaps that
 922 Maria: hmm a couple yeah but we just don't
 923 listen to them if they're not interesting if
 924 they are then we take notes and then we
 925 say ok (.) can't stand you
 926 Alan: Hmm
 927 Maria: and that's it
 928 Alan: you also said I think ehm in our one-to-
 929 one and also in our group session we
 930 talked about talent and you said you
 931 don't like the word talent (.) a:nd
 932 Maria: I still don't
 933 Alan: hmm (.) so to be a good interpreter for
 934 you?
 935 Maria: you can have I I am not saying there is
 936 not such such a thing as talent there is (.)
 937 but not for learning languages (..)
 938 Alan: hm mm
 939 Maria: you can be talented in mediation because
 940 maybe you have (.) a better relationship

941 you can be in a better relationship with
 942 other people with the person you are
 943 talking to maybe because you're not (.)
 944 shy and you're not afraid to look the
 945 person in the eye and he makes you feel
 946 way more comfortable
 947 Alan: hm
 948 Maria: and because maybe you know that
 949 you're the focus point in everything (..)
 950 so everything (.) is (.) ruled by you
 951 Alan: hm m
 952 Maria: and people are scared of it so sometimes
 953 they don't realise it and they say ok
 954 sorry can you repeat it (.) it's not your
 955 fault if he's talked for 10 minutes you
 956 can ask cos you're the one whose ruling
 957 everything (.) so I'm saying for that you
 958 can have a talent so if you we say faccia
 959 da culo ((Italian idiomatic phrase for
 960 shameless)) if you have a good faccia da
 961 culo you can do what ever you want and
 962 that's what a lot of people who are good
 963 who do really good at the exam have cos
 964 you're not afraid to speak with the other
 965 person even though he's a teacher or (.)
 966 he's the king of (norway) you know
 967 you're as good as him in that thing (.)
 968 and so you can put yourself on the same
 969 level of the other person and that is
 970 amazing and that is a talent cos nobo-
 971 not everybody has it (..) but not for
 972 learning languages it takes passion and
 973 of course you can be (...) piu portato (.)
 974 so if maybe when you were a child your

975 mother was talking French with some
 976 friends at the phone or you met some
 977 English people you might be your mind
 978 might be a bit more open (.) but it
 979 doesn't mean you're better it makes it
 980 makes it makes it for you simpler to
 981 understand it and maybe to learn it (..)
 982 but it's not a talent (.) it's not something
 983 that was giving to you by god (..)
 984 Alan: that's how you interpret the word talent?
 985 Maria: sometimes not with faccia da culo
 986 ((Italian for shameless, brass-necked))
 987 that's not given by god it's given by
 988 experience and life and theatre and
 989 everything you do (..) I: think that to
 990 play and to be an actor is talent and it's
 991 given by god because some people are
 992 just amazing (.) on the stage and when
 993 they are not they're shy and insecure but
 994 the stage gives them everything they
 995 need to all they need so (.) that is the
 996 talent for me
 997 Alan: do you think that [might be
 998 Maria: [or painting
 999 painting is like drawing that is talent it's
 1000 not something you can you can study it
 1001 but it will never be natural for you (.)
 1002 and you'll always draw your men like
 1003 sticks and (.)
 1004 Alan: hm m you said that you know it's talent
 1005 perhaps when you stand on the stage (.)
 1006 you become different from what you are
 1007 Maria: yes

1008 Alan: is that are there some parallels with
 1009 interpreting there?
 1010 Maria: yes I think so (.) I think that (..) it does (.)
 1011 when you are interpreting you are being
 1012 an actor because you are (..) you're
 1013 trying not to emulate the other person
 1014 because if she's angry you cannot be (.)
 1015 you have to mediate her feelings
 1016 between you (.) you are you are the in-
 1017 betweener so you have to mediate
 1018 everything (..) feelings of course
 1019 Alan: yeah
 1020 Maria: and words a:nd (.) strong words and
 1021 strong things and movements (.) cos if
 1022 I'm talking if I'm with an Italian guy
 1023 and I'm talking with an English guy and
 1024 he starts doing like this it means he's
 1025 mad not his hope for luck and I as the
 1026 mediator I have to mediate everything so
 1027 I am being an actor because I am being
 1028 an actor between two cultures and I'm
 1029 trying to put in them together and makes
 1030 them having sense (.) so it is like being
 1031 an actor but it's not like being on stage (.)
 1032 cos being on stage you are another
 1033 person (.) mediation you are in yourself
 1034 you are using what you are and what you
 1035 know and you're not taking it I I said
 1036 when you get on the stage (.) you're
 1037 taking energy from the stage so it's all
 1038 the people who have gone through it all
 1039 the people who have walked on the stage
 1040 on that stage they're giving you their
 1041 strength so it's not only your strength

1042 that you're using but (.) the theatre the
 1043 theatre with the capital T (..) in
 1044 mediation I think it's you you are the
 1045 matter (.) you are taking everything you
 1046 can from you and the other two person
 1047 of course (you're saying) mediation (.)
 1048 we are mediating what they want to say
 1049 so it's not your thoughts (..) but you are
 1050 so good you can (.) make them
 1051 understand each other and make them
 1052 reasonable if they're not
 1053 Alan: (.) so you don't feel like it's like acting?
 1054 When you interpret
 1055 Maria: you it's a bit like acting but (..) it's not
 1056 like acting on stage (.) that is different
 1057 Alan: and acting on stage you said some
 1058 people have talent as you said
 1059 Maria: yes and maybe they don't have it for
 1060 mediation because it (.) like they can be
 1061 a little bit more relaxed that what they
 1062 would be normally if they hadn't been
 1063 on the stage (..) but it's not the same you
 1064 don't you might have a public but it's
 1065 not you're not working for them you're
 1066 not working for yourself you are
 1067 working for two other people (.) so you
 1068 have to think half of your brain is for
 1069 one people for one person half of your
 1070 brain is for the other (.) and your brain (.)
 1071 total (.) is for both of them (..) so you
 1072 make them co-operate that is great but
 1073 it's not acting on the stage
 1074 Alan: right (.) you make them co-operate?
 1075 Maria: yes

1076 Alan: [cos you
 1077 Maria: [that's
 1078 Why you have to (.) that's what your
 1079 power is you are making them to co-
 1080 operate not some machine or something
 1081 else (.) you are
 1082 Alan: that came across a lot in our one-to-one
 1083 and in our group session as well I think
 1084 that you see interpreting sort of as
 1085 bringing harmony and understanding
 1086 between cultures=
 1087 Maria: =yes=
 1088 Alan: =and people (.) that's quite a strong
 1089 belief I think still is it?
 1090 Maria: I think so
 1091 Alan: hmm
 1092 Maria: it is again (.) you're mad (.) no (.) I hope
 1093 I've taken you luck (.) or I don't know
 1094 I'm giving away (.) I don't know how to
 1095 say it (.) non ti porto sfortuno (.)
 1096 Alan: yeah I don't bring you bad luck
 1097 Maria: yeah I don't bring you bad luck
 1098 Alan: hm m (.)
 1099 Maria: and it might cau:se some
 1100 misunderstandings if a mediator is not
 1101 there (.) and so not just the words but the
 1102 culture
 1103 Alan: hm m (.)
 1104 Maria: a:nd what if you're talking with a
 1105 Chinese per- people er person (.) and he
 1106 starts picking his nose
 1107 Alan: hm m
 1108 Maria: it's disgusting he's disgracing me (..)
 1109 like he's not (.) he's not respecting me

1110 for what I am maybe I am a boss and
 1111 I'm saying no I'm sorry it's the Chinese
 1112 culture it is considered impolite to make
 1113 sounds so he wouldn't not blow his
 1114 nose (..) in front of you because he is
 1115 taking you respects he's respecting you
 1116 Alan: hm m
 1117 Maria: and that's his way to do it (..) so you
 1118 don't need to (..) call the security
 1119 ((laughter))
 1120 Alan: you also said that a erm you need a lot of
 1121 help and support to study here
 1122 Maria: I think so (..) I think sometimes you just
 1123 (..) you just want to say ok I'll do it
 1124 another day and I'll do it another year
 1125 I'll take the exam another time (..) I'm
 1126 not ready I don't want to die on the
 1127 books (..) and you realise you're not just
 1128 doing it for yourself you're not (..) you're
 1129 not here to take pride only to yourself
 1130 but to your family because they are
 1131 believing in you and I think that gives
 1132 you the strength to do it
 1133 Alan: hm m
 1134 Maria: like (..) I'm believing in you it means you
 1135 can do it doesn't mean (..) you have to do
 1136 it now (..) but I believe you can do it (..
 1137 and so I believe you can finish all your
 1138 exams before the summer comes (..) well
 1139 if she believes it maybe she's right she
 1140 has never been wrong before (..) I'm
 1141 saying
 1142 Alan: whose she (..) sorry

1143 Maria: erm: mum but like I'm taking all my
 1144 exams before summer so I was just
 1145 saying like that (.) but I think it's
 1146 important to have support and family (.)
 1147 and friends
 1148 Alan: hm (.) can you give me an example of
 1149 when you've thought about family and
 1150 friends
 1151 Maria: mm (..) that sometimes when I come (.)
 1152 home from erm mediation from Russian
 1153 mediation
 1154 Alan: hm
 1155 Maria: I say ok ((tone of exhaustion)) I'm never
 1156 gonna do it why am I doing this it's why
 1157 am I doing it? Will I ever be able to do it?
 1158 Alan: hm m
 1159 Maria: and then my boyfriend calls me and says
 1160 what are you saying you've always been
 1161 (.) really good in everything (..) a:nd if
 1162 you're saying you don't know anything
 1163 you're ra- you're wrong because you
 1164 know a lot and you're studying for it and
 1165 you're preparing yourself for that of
 1166 course you don't know it now because
 1167 you're not ready (.) but you will so just
 1168 keep doing it and if it's hard the first
 1169 time it will not be that hard the second
 1170 time and maybe it will be easy the third
 1171 time so just keep trying (.) and keep
 1172 going it doesn't come sleeping (.)and the
 1173 next day I'm (wrong) and I can do the
 1174 mediation it's only the feeling that I had
 1175 before going there because when I am
 1176 there I can do it my brain opens (.) but

1177 like when I am at sitting in my place and
 1178 I am looking at and they're talking so
 1179 fast I'm saying oh my god I can't
 1180 Alan: hm m
 1181 Maria: and then I remember he believes in me
 1182 so he knows what I am doing he knows
 1183 what I am capable what I am capable of
 1184 even though sometimes I forget it
 1185 Alan: hm m
 1186 Maria: and that is really important
 1187 Alan: hm (.) so your boyfriend is really
 1188 important for you in all
 1189 Maria: yeah (.) we've been travelling together
 1190 we've been knowing each other since
 1191 the first year of high school (.) and (..) I
 1192 think we travelled the whole year last
 1193 year (.) it's really important so we know
 1194 a lot about each other and we know (..)
 1195 when we're talking on the phone we
 1196 know who's weak and why and what
 1197 was going on in his mind and (..) why:
 1198 he behaved like that or I know his
 1199 problem he knows mine (.) and so we
 1200 give strength to each other every time
 1201 we can and so that is really important I
 1202 don't know if I could I could live
 1203 without him but it would be so much
 1204 harder so I think it's greatly important to
 1205 have somebody who supports you and
 1206 not only your family because your
 1207 family will always support you it should
 1208 (..) but (.) somebody you know you have
 1209 built your trust on and you know they

1210 trust you a:nd rely on you for a reason
 1211 not just because their family they have to
 1212 Alan: hm m so when you have to you you talk
 1213 to your boyfriend because you said you
 1214 thought you couldn't (.) do the
 1215 mediation was that anticipating (.) the
 1216 mediation or actually doing the
 1217 mediation
 1218 Maria: oh I was anticipating it it was we had a
 1219 first lesson a:nd (.) we had never done
 1220 mediation before we had just finished
 1221 grammar so we hadn't (studied) it yet
 1222 because we had lesson on Tuesday and
 1223 Wednesday (.) so Tuesday we finished
 1224 grammar it was the last case
 1225 instrumentally which is quite big and on
 1226 Wednesday she said ok then we are
 1227 going to start mediation and she kept
 1228 correcting everything maybe you know
 1229 the words but when you're declining it
 1230 you missed the (5.0) the dessonance (...)
 1231 and she keeps correcting it and she keeps
 1232 saying so come on come on you can do
 1233 it come on come on but you're saying oh
 1234 my god it's so big I can't I can't it's too
 1235 big (..) and then when you go there it's
 1236 after a couple of weeks so you have had
 1237 time to study and you know you're a bit
 1238 more satisfied of what you're work is
 1239 and (.) you know you can rely on some
 1240 things (.) it's better
 1241 Alan: hm
 1242 Maria: but (3.0) sometimes it's hard and it's
 1243 good to have somebody that you you

1244 know you would say it to yourself in a
 1245 couple of days maybe after mediation so
 1246 yeah you see marta it wasn't that hard
 1247 you did it but if somebody believes in
 1248 you before you do it believes you can do
 1249 it even though you haven't done it yet (.)
 1250 I think it's great
 1251 Alan: hm (.) you said that em you know to be
 1252 an interpreter you need to be almost
 1253 perfect in the language accent and
 1254 grammar=
 1255 Maria: =ah I'm not really sure of that of it now I
 1256 think it's just em: (..) (greed) that is
 1257 talking
 1258 Alan: sorry?
 1259 Maria: greed
 1260 Alan: gree::d?
 1261 Maria: yeah (.) I'd lo:ve to have a perfect accent
 1262 and to be able to switch between
 1263 different accents (.) and to be able to: (..) use
 1264 a language a foreign language the
 1265 way I use mine
 1266 Alan: hm m
 1267 Maria: so switching and changing and going
 1268 from (..) one meaning to another (.) that
 1269 would be great but I don't think it's (.)
 1270 that neces- necessary to be a perfect
 1271 interpreter you can be an interpreter even
 1272 though you don't know the language
 1273 perfectly if you don't understand a word
 1274 you can ask (.) because you have the
 1275 power you have (.) the control of the
 1276 situation (.) yeah
 1277 Alan: when did you change your mind then?

1278 Maria: ahh don't know (.) didn't really make a
 1279 switch a switch and change but (.) I went
 1280 through it and I realised it's not that
 1281 important I know people who are not
 1282 that good in english but they can do a
 1283 really good mediation because they are
 1284 able to play with the words (.) they
 1285 understand the meaning even if they
 1286 don't know how to say maybe (.) drapes
 1287 they can't remember the word drapes but
 1288 they can explain it in another way so (.)
 1289 now I don't think it is necessary (.)
 1290 necessary (.) I think it would be great to
 1291 know to perfectly know a language but
 1292 (3.0)
 1293 Alan: hm (.) it's this idea of you being your
 1294 flea perhaps
 1295 Maria: yeah
 1296 ((laughter))
 1297 Alan: noticing that the task is a little daunting
 1298 ((laughter)) yeah (.) but how do you
 1299 think just to finish perhaps erm how do
 1300 you think things are going to develop
 1301 then (.) in the next
 1302 Maria: hmm
 1303 Alan: couple of years?
 1304 Maria: I don't know I'm just really excited
 1305 about it (.) a:nd it seems to me it's going
 1306 so fast since I started a couple of months
 1307 ago and it's the end of the first year a:nd
 1308 (.) I'm: making a lot of friends and then
 1309 there is summer and then half of them
 1310 are going away on erasmus the other
 1311 half is going away because they have

1312 finished the third year so it's a bit (.) big
 1313 it's a big thing a:nd I'm looking forward
 1314 for next year because it's going to be
 1315 different again because I know how
 1316 things works so: (2.0) I can enjoy more
 1317 hopefully in what there in what there is
 1318 offering (and) more of university so the
 1319 university life I'm going to study in
 1320 different places with other people
 1321 because it helps or: I don't know choose
 1322 make some- different decisions and
 1323 maybe know more people and see or do
 1324 what they tell me see what they can
 1325 transmit me
 1326 Alan: hm m
 1327 Maria: so: I'm excited
 1328 Alan: hm you said you know how it's going to
 1329 happen next year what's going to happen
 1330 did I understand?
 1331 Maria: erm (..) I don't know I'm going to take
 1332 I'm still going to be taking my courses
 1333 and I'm gonna be taking Russian
 1334 literature which I've not taken before
 1335 a:nd (.) I know what they're gonna talk
 1336 about because we know the books but (.)
 1337 it's gonna be different (.) and it's gonna
 1338 be way: interesting [than (xx)
 1339 Alan: [more interesting
 1340 Maria: more interesting than the grammar
 1341 because grammar it's interesting but (.)
 1342 not that much because it (.) we're going
 1343 to see (actually news) and people are
 1344 gonna be away for a semester or for a
 1345 term or for two months in the erasmus

1346 and then they're gonna come back and
 1347 tell everything has happened
 1348 Alan: hmm
 1349 Maria: a:nd I hope I'll have my things to tell
 1350 and so we're gonna share more and
 1351 know more about each other (..)
 1352 Alan: hm m and when you finish are you still
 1353 thinking about (..) a high:
 1354 Maria: yes
 1355 Alan: level
 1356 Maria: yes I'm not sure it's gonna be here (.) I'd
 1357 like to go abroad and do it abroad (.) or:
 1358 (.) I don't know I wouldn't (.) I don't
 1359 know if I will take another gap year (.)
 1360 cos I know I love to travel but I want to
 1361 have (.) like (.) a perfect erm preparation
 1362 from work and then maybe start
 1363 travelling and looking for work or I I
 1364 don't know I I think I would like to keep
 1365 on studying (.) but I don't know if here
 1366 or somewhere else Ve or (3.0) I
 1367 wouldn't go to Trieste now I'm happy I
 1368 came here instead of Trieste (.) but I
 1369 don't know
 1370 Alan: hm so you'd like to continue perhaps
 1371 with education
 1372 Maria: yeah
 1373 Alan: a post graduate=
 1374 Maria: =yeah I [think so
 1375 Alan: [degree (.)
 1376 and after that?
 1377 Maria: after that erm: I have my last (xx) the
 1378 first one not the second one is living in
 1379 Sardinia with sheeps and (.) being a

1380 shepherd and just enjoying nature and
 1381 the other one is being an interpreter or
 1382 journalist or (.) something else different
 1383 and travel (.) in a lot of different places
 1384 and know a lot of people and just (2.0)
 1385 see the world
 1386 Alan: hm (.) so you're you're attracted to both
 1387 of these [worlds?
 1388 Maria: [yes
 1389 I know there are good things in both of
 1390 them
 1391 Alan: Sardinia and sheep
 1392 Maria: yes ((laughs)) I don't care sheeps I prefer
 1393 horses but (.) sardinia's (3.0) it's like (.)
 1394 hm a magnet (.) once you go there you
 1395 cannot leave it (2.0)
 1396 Alan: interesting ((marta laughs)) choice of
 1397 worlds very different yeah?
 1398 Maria: yeah ((laughs))
 1399 Alan: ok thank you very much

Matteo 2: Second interview

- 1 Alan: so (.) matteo erm since our last chat (.) a
2 few months ago (.) how would you see
3 yourself now at the university what's
4 been going on (.) how do you see
5 yourself
- 6 Matteo: well I'm I'm more satisfied (.) m:
7 because erm at the beginning of no in
8 the beginning of the semester erm well
9 erm (.) last semester we didn't do erm
10 mediation and so I think it is the subject
11 that characterize this faculty in general
12 and so I was not so satisfied (.) well I I
13 want to become an interpreter so I
14 couldn't find anything that was so: er
15 focused on the interpreters job for
16 example but (.) in the second semester
17 the mediation classes were (.) awesome
18 even though I have preferred the even
19 though I have preferred the german one
20 because I think it was more structured
21 than the English one and (.) and that's it
22 well I am quite satisfied and I find the I
23 found the subjects quite difficult (.) erm
24 (.) and that's it
- 25 Alan: you said you were quite satisfied (...) I
26 mean (.) german is better because it's
27 more structured why why is it better?
- 28 Matteo: (.) well (..) in the English classes we
29 just I think I think er we have done just I
30 think 4 mediations prepared by our

31 professors and other mediations were
32 prepared by (bad) students well I think
33 that
34 Alan: sorry by bad students?
35 Matteo: by the students
36 Alan: oh
37 Matteo: by the students yes sorry (.) and well I
38 think that even though the mediations
39 prepared by the students were quite
40 difficult too I think that they (.) the
41 students don't have in their mind what is
42 really complicated in the job of the
43 interpreter they just don't know what are
44 the points er that need more focus or:
45 well I think that the professors should
46 have given more attention to the
47 mediation itself (.) and the german class
48 was completely different the mediation
49 was prepared by the by our professors
50 the Italian speaker and the german
51 speaker and well they were really
52 difficult I think even though I haven't
53 studied german before cos this is the first
54 year I (.) well the first year of study (.)
55 and the mediation were more
56 complicated and they the professors let
57 you mediate from the beginning to the
58 end and at the end of the mediation they
59 gave you the feedback and it was (.) well
60 even though you thought it was a good
61 mediation or even well you didn't think
62 you had done so many errors you
63 discovered that you had messed up all
64 the things during the mediation and so

65 on (.) and that's it cos because in the
 66 English class (2.0) there were some
 67 classes where the students hadn't
 68 prepared the mediation for that lesson
 69 and without their mediations we couldn't
 70 do any lesson because nothing nothing
 71 was prepared and I found that quite
 72 difficult (.) quite
 73 Alan: what was the teacher's reaction to this (.)
 74 non preparation
 75 Matteo: they were (.) erm they were (.) they were
 76 very polite erm (2.0) so they just said
 77 well just get them prepared for next time
 78 (.) I think that it's not the professors
 79 fault (.) I think it's the student's fault too
 80 cos erm in my opinion (2.0) well (..) the
 81 class the class itself needed more
 82 interaction between students and
 83 professors (..) just that I think (...)
 84 Alan: but in the german session they prepared
 85 the the teachers prepared the material
 86 Matteo: yes
 87 Alan: and the English did not (..)
 88 Matteo: no the English teachers prepared the
 89 material but just (.) for example we
 90 analysed 4 topics and they prepared just
 91 1 mediation for each topic (...)
 92 Alan: right
 93 Matteo: and the other mediations were prepared by
 94 the students (.) for example the first lesson
 95 we did the mediation prepared by the
 96 professors ok next time prepare in a group
 97 of 3 or 2 prepare other mediations (.) ok
 98 a:nd then after 3 or 4 classes we changed

99 topic and then another mediation prepared
 100 by the professors and the other by
 101 the students and so we found easy
 102 mediations er difficult mediations there
 103 wasn't a trend that was (.) that remained the
 104 same all over the classes and so they were
 105 great classes (.) but I think that they can be
 106 improved (.)
 107 Alan: right because there was less preparation
 108 for some than others
 109 Matteo: yes
 110 Alan: right (.) and did you feel the teachers
 111 were responsible for organising this?
 112 Matteo: yes yes yes erm (..) just erm another
 113 thing that i: i've found erm during the
 114 our classes was the: (.) well the
 115 arguments around the possibility to
 116 refuse the the mark you get at at the
 117 exam
 118 Alan: hm m
 119 Matteo: and I have found two: different
 120 reactions between the English professors
 121 and the german professors er: i i just
 122 don't know the law or (these) sort of
 123 things but er:m even in the university of
 124 rome la sapienza (.) i: could er: refuse
 125 the the score i: i got in an exam and and
 126 repeat that exam or the: (.) whe-
 127 whenever I wanted
 128 Alan: hm m
 129 Matteo: bu: (..) and the german class the the
 130 german professor said yes you can do it
 131 you can do it even here even here at the
 132 SSLMIT but the professor but but the

133 english professors said no (..) we: asked
 134 why (...) but (.) there (.) there wasn't a
 135 clear response (.) they just said no (we)
 136 that's the way: we do things here (.) er:
 137 it's not possible (..)
 138 Alan: the way we the English do it [here? (or
 139 the way we:)
 140 Matteo:[the: erm
 141 it was not clear
 142 Alan: ah
 143 Matteo:it was not clear (.) and well (.) the
 144 students were (.) quite sca:red cos you
 145 know (.) the: the class is not so big (.)
 146 Alan: hm
 147 Matteo:and so the the professors know all the
 148 students (.) so they were quite scared (.)
 149 I was quite scared and so i: i said ok it's
 150 ok (.)
 151 Alan: so when you say you were scared you
 152 were scared to (.) raise your voice?
 153 Matteo: yes (..) [yes
 154 Alan: [bu- but
 155 you weren't happy
 156 Matteo: err (..) yes I wasn't happy because i: I
 157 think I know (.) how:: (..) how are things
 158 in the university in general we: we have
 159 this right (.) the students have the right
 160 to refuse the the score they get at the
 161 exam (.)
 162 Alan: hm m
 163 Matteo: and they can I I think and i: (.) yes I
 164 know that they can refuse it er whenever
 165 they want (.) and I just don't know why
 166 the because it's just behaviour that

167 changes according to the according to
 168 the languages (.)
 169 Alan: hm
 170 Matteo: erm
 171 Alan: can you explain what that means (.) the
 172 changes according [to the language
 173 Matteo: [in the the
 174 german professors let you do this er I
 175 think the Japanese professor let you
 176 refuse the score but the not the English
 177 professors all the english professors (.)
 178 but the mediation professors I think that
 179 they're not so: (2.0) glad to do it do that
 180 Alan: right (.) who are they specifically
 181 Matteo: ermm (.) professor Barnard and
 182 sabatelli
 183 Alan: right (.) only they?
 184 Matteo: (2.0) no (.) because my flat mate is a
 185 second year student and he did the
 186 mediation exam of the second year with
 187 professor martins I think and he said
 188 even the professor martins said that they
 189 couldn't refuse the score (.) and I know
 190 they said that before the beginning of the
 191 exam (.) so this thing didn't come out
 192 during the classes (.) but just before the
 193 exam
 194 Alan: hm
 195 Matteo: the day of the exam
 196 Alan: yeah
 197 Matteo: and i: he told me that he told me how
 198 things were las- (.) no this year cos his
 199 the a second year student so he did this
 200 exam las- yes last January (.) and so I

201 think that it's just the way the
 202 department (.) do: the exams but I don't
 203 know I'm just er I'm just (.) guessing
 204 Alan: hm but it's not clear
 205 Matteo: yes it's not clear yes (.) I know the
 206 things have changed now cos because (.)
 207 erm a student (xxx) I think asked about
 208 this asked about this matter er I don't
 209 know if to the segreteria didattica ((the
 210 departmental office)) or another
 211 department but and (.) well the things
 212 were not so clear and so the professor
 213 said ok you can refuse the score but if
 214 you do the exam another time (.) well
 215 I'm not so sure that you will get a score
 216 ah (.) a better score (..) but I just don't
 217 know how are things and so I'm just
 218 guessing
 219 Alan: hm m (..) what about well you said you
 220 love Japanese and that was a very
 221 important language for you (.) how have
 222 your Japanese studies being going?
 223 Matteo: well I have studied Japanese on my
 224 own because (.) I can't attend the classes
 225 here at the SSLMIT cos what the
 226 Japanese professor here in forli (.) well
 227 what she does in er three years what we
 228 did in 1 year in the university of rome
 229 and so I just continued on my own (.) I
 230 know a Japanese girl here in forli and
 231 she is from co- cobin around cobin I
 232 think in japan and well she is here in
 233 italy just for just a year and well I

234 practice Japanese with her er we became
 235 friends a:nd=
 236 Alan: =you're not studying it now?
 237 Matteo: erm just on my own (.) I have my books
 238 I'm studying advanced Japanese and
 239 that's it (.) but just on my own I I've
 240 won an erasmus scholarship and so next
 241 year I will be in germany but erm (.) the
 242 city of Bonn that's the city I will study
 243 in next year (.) it's one of the best (.) in
 244 Bonn there's one of the best universities
 245 in the world for the Japanese studies and
 246 so I think that I can continue the study of
 247 this language in germ- in gemany I think
 248 Alan: but sorry isn't (.) you've got English
 249 first language
 250 Matteo: English first language er german second
 251 language and Japanese third language
 252 but erm all the Japanese exams are
 253 English first language validated ? are
 254 co:n- in Italian is convalidati they are:
 255 they er accepted all the exams I did in
 256 rome a:nd that's it so I just don't have to
 257 do more exams here in forli and I didn't
 258 choose another another third language
 259 because I think English german and
 260 Japanese are: (..) for the at moment are
 261 enough cos I have to improve my
 262 English infinitely and german and
 263 Japanese as well
 264 Alan: hm (.) so you have no intention of
 265 following the Japanese courses
 266 Matteo: here in forli?
 267 Alan: yeah

268 Matteo: m no I don't think so because I know I
 269 talked with the Japanese professor at the
 270 beginning of the first semester and she
 271 said no there's no need to attend the
 272 classes because they're quite basic (.)
 273 erm and so I just don't attend the
 274 Japanese classes and I just study
 275 Japanese on my own
 276 Alan: because you did say at one point in our
 277 past conversation that you wanted to be
 278 a mediator between the two cultures
 279 between Japanese and I think the
 280 English culture
 281 Matteo: English culture german culture Italian
 282 culture
 283 Alan: right
 284 Matteo: and gen- in general
 285 Alan: so how do you envisage that now you
 286 have no contact with the Japanese (.)
 287 here (.) do you think you are already at a
 288 certain level where
 289 Matteo: no no no (.) no but I think in these
 290 classes the (2.0) well the professor the
 291 Japanese professor professor (xx) said
 292 that the japanese classes are centred on
 293 grammar on:: vocabulary and things I
 294 have already done in and couldn't find
 295 more in those classes and I know that I
 296 have to improve my Japanese and my
 297 (3.0) and my whole knowledge of the
 298 Japanese culture and I hope the third and
 299 I hope I will spend erm (..) not all the
 300 third year but half erm half in japan erm

301 (.) of the third year because I will try to
 302 win the overseas scholarship
 303 Alan: right
 304 Matteo: and I think it's only way to bring my
 305 Japanese knowledge to a new level (.)
 306 and (...) and even though i: well (3.0) I
 307 think that after the SSLMIT I will spend
 308 at least a year in japan
 309 Alan: right
 310 Matteo: to im- improve my now the most
 311 important thing is to get the tech- the
 312 mediation technique (.) and I have to
 313 improve my English and german (.) cos I
 314 have been studying English since I was a
 315 baby but I have to improve infinitely
 316 because even now I just do many errors
 317 and (.) even the day we met I don't
 318 know what it was but well I said to meet
 319 you ((laughs)) and not it's good to see
 320 you again and it was because I was tired
 321 of the exam (..) and but was (3.0) an
 322 error well I said oh my god (.) how can I
 323 say this sort of things
 324 Alan: you did say you wanted to be an
 325 interpreter and it was a very strong
 326 desire
 327 Matteo: yes
 328 Alan: and but you said you need to speak the
 329 languages perfectly
 330 Matteo: yes
 331 Alan: do you still believe that that's the case?
 332 Matteo: yes (.) I think that you need (.) you need
 333 many things and the knowledge of the
 334 language is just the first thing but there's

335 a (world) behind the language it's just
 336 the first thing erm the first element you
 337 need to become an interpreter I think (.)
 338 and but you need many things and I'm
 339 here to find them (.) because if I wanted
 340 to learn English perfectly I would have
 341 gone to England and that's it but I'm
 342 here because I think there's more to be
 343 (taught) I think
 344 Alan: are there any experiences in the
 345 classroom that have made you think
 346 differently about this? (.) or re-enforced
 347 perhaps?
 348 Matteo:mm yes even though the (.) i: the
 349 german professor (.) professoresa
 350 moscato erm: (2.) said that the most
 351 important thing is the language (.) the
 352 most important thing because I'm: well
 353 next year I will spend next year in
 354 germany but in the university of Bonn I
 355 won't attend any mediation class and so
 356 (...) so I was afraid that well a year
 357 without mediation (.) erm how can I
 358 become an interpreter? (.) a:nd the
 359 professor moscato said (.) no just don't
 360 worry (.) you the first thing is to go er:
 361 just go to germany learn learn german
 362 and then I can teach you the the well she
 363 said I can teach you the techniques in an
 364 hour (.) but the most important thing the
 365 most important thing is to learn the (.)
 366 the language and so: but (..) I think that
 367 (.) in my opinion there's a world behind
 368 the language

369 Alan: but you you're moscato said she could
 370 teach you
 371 Matteo: yeah the techniques in an hour but I I
 372 think she was kidding (.) well she was
 373 just saying the language is the important
 374 thing (.) and when you: well when you
 375 will be back in forli you will have plenty
 376 of time to learn the techniques to (work)
 377 in the classes I can maybe I will attend
 378 all the mediation classes the the third
 379 year
 380 Alan: this is not the first time you said moscato
 381 was kidding (.) when one of our students
 382 said she was talking about being sort of
 383 split personality and working=
 384 Matteo: =yes
 385 Alan: and she said you said she was just
 386 kidding again
 387 Matteo: yes mmm I think that (2.0) she's a great
 388 interpreter (..) and so it's just I think it's
 389 just a matter of personality (..) and and
 390 that's it (..) I don't know if she is right or
 391 not about (.) many things she thinks
 392 about the job itself (.) for example she
 393 say er you can't become an interpreter
 394 you were born as an interpreter if you:
 395 and that's it (.) and it was qui- quite
 396 scary cos you say well am I an
 397 interpreter or not (..) and well I think it's
 398 just a matter of personality you know (.)
 399 and that's it (.=
 400 Alan: but when she said to you (.) you cannot
 401 become (.) you either are or you are not

402 an interpreter (.) and you say that I was
 403 quite scary
 404 Matteo: yes but m: well (.) she said that to the
 405 german class but she also said if you are
 406 here th- the SSLMIT (.) you were born
 407 interpreters or translators (.) and so we
 408 say ((makes phew sound)) (.) ok
 409 Alan: but she still said you were (.)
 410 Matteo: yes cos she said that em at the end of
 411 the lesson (..) not at the beginning when
 412 when well erm (..) what happened was
 413 erm a student asked a question to the to
 414 the professor and she said this thing er: I
 415 I don't think that you can become an
 416 interpreter you::: you were born as an
 417 interpreter or as a translator and that's it
 418 (.) at the end of the lesson another
 419 student said well but er how can I know
 420 that? and she said well you're here at the
 421 SSLMIT you have passed a: (.) an entry
 422 test and it was (...) it was it was very
 423 difficult so if you are here now you have
 424 the ta- you have the talent (..) and that's
 425 it (.) it was (..) yes it was scary but just
 426 because we know professor moscato is a
 427 great interpreter and so (.) erm since
 428 she's one of the best german interpreters
 429 here in italy (.) er everything that comes
 430 out ((laughs)) of her mouth is a is gold
 431 for us (.)
 432 Alan: hm (.) you say she's one of the best (.)
 433 again that was sort of questioned a bit in
 434 the past because I think one of the

435 students said well she SAYS she's the
 436 best
 437 Matteo: yes (.) she NO (.) she no no no she
 438 didn't say that (.) she didn't say that (.)
 439 erm well her behaviour erm makes you
 440 think that (2.0) and what well if I think
 441 hm (.) I did my: my research (.) at home
 442 on my own and well I found that she's
 443 one of the of the best german interpreters
 444 here in here in italy since she works for
 445 the the: erm:: presidente del consiglio (.)
 446 the prime minister (.) here (in the world)
 447 (.) it's a job that you cannot get if you
 448 are not one of the best interpreters (.) I
 449 think but (.)
 450 Alan: but she told you that in the classroom or:
 451 Matteo: no no no no no
 452 Alan: how did you know she was one of the
 453 best before you researched her? (..) you
 454 said she gave you some impression
 455 perhaps
 456 Matteo: (2.0) m:::
 457 Alan: you [said
 458 Matteo: [NO no no
 459 One one of the things she said erm
 460 during the first lesson (.) was well I'm
 461 I'm a real interpeter (2.0) the first thing
 462 she said (2.0) you have in front of you (.)
 463 m: a real interpreter (...) and I think it
 464 was quite strange because erm well (..)
 465 why are you saying that (.) the other
 466 professors are: (.) maybe they are not
 467 interpeters? So they cannot teach
 468 mediation or interpreting (...) wh- why

469 are you saying that? Because she said
 470 that with (.) she was quite sure quite firm:
 471 (.) and she said you have in front of you
 472 a real interpreter (..) and (we said) oh ok
 473 Alan: but how did you interpret that? (..) as
 474 you said (.) aren't we all interpreters
 475 who teach interpreting how did you
 476 interpret (.) her presentation
 477 Matteo: (2.0) well I think that (6.0) I don't think
 478 that I can say she thinks high of herself
 479 Alan: highly of herself
 480 Matteo: highly of herself yes I think she thinks
 481 highly of herself (...) bu:t m:
 482 Alan: was that obvious from the first time that
 483 she said this?
 484 Matteo: yes (...) yes
 485 Alan: why was it obvious?
 486 Matteo: er because the first lesson was quite a
 487 show (.) cos she:: she kept saying well
 488 I'm er I'm I'm a real interpreter I walked
 489 for I worked for the ministers er for
 490 angel merkel er (.) the german people
 491 just just think I'm a german native
 492 speaker a:nd (.) and this sort of things
 493 they are not so: (.) useful (.) f- for the
 494 lesson (.)
 495 Alan: useful?
 496 Matteo: ah yes useful cos all this information
 497 (2.0) I just I just don't think that they're
 498 so: useful for the: for that lesson in
 499 particular well saying well the for
 500 example the german people think that
 501 I'm a german native speaker (..) ok (.)
 502 but you can say (.) that once not (...) 2

503 times 3 times 4 times because she kept
 504 saying things like that several times
 505 during the semester (.) so she's just em:
 506 (..) I think that she's just erm: (.) a good
 507 a really good (.) interpreter and she
 508 knows that (3.0) and but it's just a matter
 509 of personality I think because in my
 510 opinion if you're one of the great
 511 interpreters and your humble in my
 512 opinion you're the best interpeter or
 513 wha- what the best m:: er: the best
 514 person in general for example if you're a
 515 painter and you're a great painter but at
 516 the same time you're humble (...) you
 517 try to teach how to paint er you just
 518 don't think so highly of yourself (..) well
 519 (.) I think that makes you one of the best
 520 persons (.) er:m (.)
 521 Alan: but you said she was one of the best
 522 interpreters (.) and yet (.) she is the
 523 person who is (.) making these
 524 comments about being one of the best
 525 interpreters you think is not necessary (..) to
 526 be the better interpreter (.) I'm curious
 527 to see how you are playing this I mean
 528 how you are thinking of this (.) you you
 529 appreciate her as the best
 530 Matteo: hm
 531 Alan: you think the best don't need to say
 532 they're the best
 533 Matteo: yes
 534 Alan: but she says that she's the best
 535 Matteo: yes (...) well (.) er:m (4.0) I know that
 536 she's (.) e:rm she's a professional ok

537 she's a professional (.) a:nd I think in my
 538 opinion she's one of the best german
 539 interpreters here in italy
 540 Alan: why?
 541 Matteo: because e:rm e:rm the: (.) the things she
 542 has done the study she (...) the study she
 543 did when she was young the way she
 544 e:rm interpreted during the lesson
 545 because she did a few mediations during
 546 the classes (.) and well all these things
 547 all together and the position she holds
 548 now (.) in italy and since she's the I
 549 think she's the president of the IET
 550 Lazio one of the region a:nd and well all
 551 these things all these things make me
 552 think she's one of the best german
 553 interpreters even before coming here in
 554 forli I knew her name (.) valentine
 555 moscato (..)
 556 Alan: how did you know that?
 557 Matteo: a: just talking with my: (.) other other
 558 students in rome with my flat mate he he
 559 (...) he was a friend of mine even before
 560 coming here in forli
 561 Alan: hm m
 562 Matteo: a:nd when I was getting information
 563 about interpreting in general about
 564 german language (.) interpreting with the
 565 german language well I: I found her
 566 name (.) quite often
 567 Alan: cos you studied oriental studies in rome
 568 Matteo: yes but I graduated in 20 erm December
 569 2011 and then I worked to: just to get the
 570 money (xx) here in forli a:nd during in

571 the meanwhile I was doing my research I
 572 was looking for a university or school
 573 that could let me become an interpreter
 574 (.) and well I didn't know that I would
 575 have studied the german language and so
 576 I was just looking for another language
 577 that was an European language and so
 578 while looking for information about the
 579 german language and interpreting with
 580 the german language well i: found
 581 several times the: the name of this
 582 professor and well I just knew that she
 583 was a great interpreter when I came here
 584 in forli and when I met her (..) well i:
 585 (...) I attended her classes and I think
 586 she' s a great interpreter but that doesn't
 587 mean that she's a (..) m: (3.0) not a great
 588 (.) it's not good to say that but (.) it's not
 589 the best person (..) in the world because I
 590 think that you're a great professional but
 591 if you're humble (..) that makes you the:
 592 great interpreter a great person er (5.0)
 593 yes I think it's just a matter of (.)
 594 personality
 595 Alan: so to be humble is important for you
 596 Matteo: yes (..) yes
 597 Alan: but in your job do you think to be
 598 humble is important?
 599 Matteo:(2.0) em: in the interpreter's job?
 600 Alan: yes
 601 Matteo: yes but I think you have to be humble (.)
 602 in all the jobs in gen- in general because
 603 not been humble makes you (..) arro-
 604 arrogant (the example xx) when you're

605 not humble you just don't see your limits
 606 (.) cos you think too highly of yourself
 607 you think you're the best (.) and you just
 608 don't see your limit and I think one of
 609 the best things i:n not in the job of
 610 interpreter but in general is erm let other
 611 people know your job (.) erm teach your
 612 job to other people (.) help help them
 613 improve (.) e:m (..) and that's it
 614 Alan: hm m so (.) just to finish so martin
 615 moscato (.) does she satisfy this criteria
 616 you're talking about? (...)
 617 Matteo: no ((low voice)) no: not entirely I think
 618 she's a great professional but I think
 619 she's not the best interpreter (..)
 620 Alan: she's certainly not the most modest by
 621 the sound of things (..) and you think
 622 that's very important so is she seriously
 623 flawed because of this lack of modesty
 624 in your opinion?
 625 Matteo: I think I think she can she can be the
 626 best interpreter (3.0) but she's not
 627 humble
 628 Alan: hm (...)
 629 Matteo: and (.) if she was humble I think she
 630 would be one of the best interpreters or
 631 the best interpreter
 632 Alan: so she's not the best=
 633 Matteo: =she's not the best one=
 634 Alan: =because she's not humble
 635 Matteo: yes because I think she's one of the best
 636 professionals
 637 Alan: hm m

638 Matteo: but (.) being a great professional
 639 doesn't make you the best interpreter (.)
 640 you're a professional (.) but you're not
 641 the best one (..) cos it's just (...) there
 642 are many things that help you (.) being
 643 the best in what you do
 644 Alan: hm
 645 Matteo: in general not in (.) it doesn't concern
 646 the interpreting (.) or the translation or
 647 the painting or (...) anything else
 648 Alan: hm (..) so what is the value of being
 649 humble in an interpreting (.) situation?
 650 Matteo: well I think that (.) m: for example even
 651 in the: well I think I think that professor
 652 moscato's a great professional but not a
 653 great teacher
 654 Alan: hm m
 655 Matteo: I think that's an important thing
 656 because we spent many lessons (..)
 657 talking about her about her job about
 658 what she did (..) and for example out of
 659 an hour's lesson (..) we: the real lesson
 660 was just (3.0) ten minutes (.) twenty
 661 minutes (..) and (3.0) and we spent (.)
 662 the other minutes about her (.) about her
 663 job ah: about how good she: is
 664 Alan: hm
 665 Matteo: (..) er: these sort of things
 666 Alan: there is a difference between her as a
 667 good teacher and her as a good
 668 interpreter
 669 Matteo: yes
 670 Alan: cos you were saying (.) if I understand
 671 correctly a good interpreter (.) has to be

672 humble but now you're talking about a
673 good teacher
674 Matteo: hm
675 Alan: so there seems to be (..) a contrast here
676 (..)
677 Matteo: well I think that you're (..) you're a
678 good interpreter
679 Alan: hm
680 Matteo: if your humble (..) well being humble
681 help you teach your job to other people
682 (..) because if you're humble you: just
683 don't spend so much time saying (.) well
684 I'm the best i: di- I did this I did that (.)
685 and so on
686 Alan: hm
687 Matteo: you you: just want the other people (.)
688 erm become good as you are (.) and I
689 think that modesty
690 Alan: hm
691 Matteo: in the my opinion I think that modesty
692 is the key in this situation (.) she's a
693 good professional but I think she's not a
694 good teacher and modesty is just what er
695 what (..) I think modesty is what she:
696 lacks?
697 Alan: yeah
698 Matteo: I think modesty is what she lacks and I
699 think she (.) need that to become a::: (2.0)
700 a great teacher too (.)
701 Alan: a go- a great teacher too
702 Matteo: too too yes
703 Alan: right (..) but you also said erm (...) I
704 think at one moment you said you don't
705 have great talent but that talent isn't the

706 most important thing (.) that what makes
 707 you improve isn't the talent but the
 708 passion
 709 Matteo: yes
 710 Alan: (..) do you still agree with that comment
 711 that thought?
 712 Matteo: yes because erm: (..) I think that the
 713 passion for the: foreign languages I think
 714 that it's what erm (...) I think it's what
 715 brought me: here (.) here in forli
 716 (.)because when I talk with the other
 717 students they just say (.) oh my god this
 718 is your second bachelor degree (.) you're
 719 mad you (.) how can you spend so much
 720 time studying I'm just a year has passed
 721 and I'm just tired of studying (...) well I:
 722 (.) just answer well I lo:ve what I'm
 723 studying i: love English language I love
 724 german language I love Japanese
 725 language I love and all the subjects that
 726 erm: concern the: (..) the foreign
 727 languages (.) in general and (...) I think
 728 that passion is what makes me go on
 729 passion is what gi- passion is what gives
 730 me strength (.) in general well I'm from
 731 rome so I'm: far from my family I was
 732 far from my girlfriend (.) erm (..)
 733 Alan: why do you say was?
 734 Matteo: cos she's not my girlfriend any more
 735 ((laughs))
 736 Alan: ahh
 737 Matteo: (..) e:rm (...)
 738 Alan: is that something to do with being here
 739 or:? =

740 Matteo: =yes: (.) yes of course
 741 Alan: you [talked about how
 742 Matteo: [(xxx)
 743 Alan: much work you have to do and how
 744 much you have to invest in studying here
 745 do you think (.) is that part of the reason
 746 or:
 747 Matteo: yes it's part of the reason well she: she
 748 studied oriental languages with me
 749 Alan: hm
 750 Matteo:(xx) in rome and (...) we graduated er (.)
 751 together and well (.) we (2.0) we were
 752 very different (.) I wanted to become
 753 interpreter but she just wanted (.) to
 754 study Japanese language but she didn't
 755 know what to do with her life (.) well i:
 756 she decided to study Japanese language
 757 in London (.) i:n (.) at the: (.) SOAS I
 758 think (.) well a university in in London
 759 and (.) and well she just said well e:rm
 760 come with me (.) or we break up (3.0)
 761 a:nd well and it was (.) the first time (.) I
 762 had to face this kind of matter my: (.)
 763 my life no my life (.) but my passion (.)
 764 or my (3.0) (not love) (.) but my private
 765 life (..)
 766 Alan: hm
 767 Matteo: (xx)
 768 Alan: and (.) your=
 769 Matteo: =and we break up (..)
 770 Alan: right
 771 Matteo: we broke up (.) e:r and that's it

772 Alan: right (..) erm (...) right so your private
 773 life (.) was put against your professional
 774 life and your passion
 775 Matteo: yes but (...) I just had to choose what
 776 was more important to me (..) at that (..)
 777 at that time
 778 Alan: hm m
 779 Matteo: e:rm (...) well (.) I just want to be
 780 happy (..) and studying languages is just
 781 one (.) of the things (.) that (made) me
 782 happy (..) a:nd (...) and so it's just (..)
 783 you: (...) I just can't live it's true I just
 784 can't live without foreign languages (..)
 785 they're very important to me (.) very
 786 important to me even even though I'm
 787 (xxx) even though I have to improve
 788 infinitely bu:t (..) I just want to improve
 789 I just want to (x) (...) I just want to
 790 study and I think my: all the other things
 791 (.) about family (.)er:m (...) they will
 792 erm (...) how can I say I think that (..)
 793 love and family will erm (.) they they
 794 won't come after but they will come
 795 along the er way:?
 796 Alan: hm m
 797 Matteo: can I say that? (.) I just think that (.) so:
 798 (...) if the things ended ended the way
 799 they ended (.) I think that maybe was not
 800 so important
 801 Alan: hm m (...) did you feel responsible or
 802 did you feel you're not responsible for
 803 this situation?
 804 Matteo: (..) n: no not responsible b: because i:
 805 said that we: could continue (...)

806 continue our (...) not our affair (.) our
 807 relation our relationship (.) relation or
 808 relationship?
 809 Alan: relationship
 810 Matteo: relationship (.) but she just said no
 811 come with me (.) and that's it (.) you
 812 studied Japanese (.) what's the story now
 813 (.) studying german becoming an
 814 interpreter (.) let's continue studying
 815 Japanese in London it's one of the best
 816 universities where you can study
 817 Japanese (.) yeah but we (have months)
 818 er (...) well it w- it was (.) er it was
 819 December (.) yes December January?
 820 and well I just said well I will do the
 821 entry test in September maybe I won-
 822 won't get in that university so what's the
 823 point in arguing about these things now?
 824 Alan: hm m
 825 Matteo: er m (..) but no she was (5.0) ((voice
 826 fades)) and so (..) the: things er: (3.0)
 827 didn't didn't go didn't go well and we
 828 broke out
 829 Alan: hm m
 830 Matteo: but ah well my passion my: er my love
 831 my love for foreign languages is a really
 832 important thing in my life thinking I
 833 think in my life (4.0) that's it
 834 Alan: ok but erm (...) just talking about this
 835 passion of yours (.) just going back to
 836 the classroom atmosphere you said that
 837 (.) you're older than some of the
 838 students in the classroom
 839 Matteo: hm m

840 Alan: ah: (...) not necessarily (.) correlated but
 841 there's a lot of competition in the
 842 classroom
 843 Matteo: hm m
 844 Alan: I'm just wondering how these things
 845 have developed in the last period (.) this
 846 idea of age difference and (.)
 847 competitiveness in the classroom how do
 848 feel about those things?
 849 Matteo: (...) well I think the: (4.0) the
 850 competitiveness is just the same but
 851 since we: (3.0) well (.) during the first
 852 semester we didn't do the mediation so:
 853 we couldn't imagine how (.) in- (..)
 854 interpreting was (.) and (.) since we have
 855 seen that the mediation itself the
 856 interpreting job is (...) really difficult
 857 there's no: (..) you you just (..) there's
 858 no room for competitiveness (..) e:::rm
 859 so: you just have to help the other
 860 students and let them help you to:
 861 improve because (.) the: the mediation is
 862 something you improve with other
 863 people not alone (..) and so during the
 864 first semester you: you could study the
 865 those subjects on your own (.) the: for
 866 example for example the (.)
 867 reformulation for mr stevens and other
 868 subjects in general well you could study
 869 that on your own but mediation is
 870 something you have to do with the: with
 871 other people (.) you can study the
 872 glossary but (..) the: the mediation and
 873 the confidence when you speak is

874 something is something you get when
 875 you're talking if you just don't have
 876 people to talk with (..) you cannot
 877 improve even though here there are not
 878 many native speakers you just improve (.)
 879 your errors their errors (.) so it's just
 880 something that has changed (.) m: we
 881 have (formed) several groups to: to do
 882 some mediation a:nd (.) well my age (.)
 883 ah: I didn't know there were other
 884 students that who were old well old?
 885 Well other students of my age or even 2
 886 or 3 years older (..) er for example
 887 during the first semester i: there was an
 888 erasmus student in my (.) er (.) in my in
 889 my house here in forli (.) but during the
 890 second semester another student came
 891 back from Russia and she took the place
 892 of the erasmus student (.) the erasmus
 893 student came back in England because
 894 she was an English student (.) and the
 895 italian student came back well she (.) she
 896 came in our apartments and well she's er
 897 28 (.) I'm 26 now a:nd she has bachelor
 898 degree and I think a master (x) 2 years
 899 what we call a magistrale and (..) and
 900 well she studied (.) I think art (..) so
 901 something completely different
 902 Alan: yeah
 903 Matteo: but she: she was not satisfied about her
 904 job about what she was doing (.) a:nd
 905 well talking with her she is a student of
 906 the SSLMIT and other students (because
 907 I know they're in the second year)

908 another student was studying erm
 909 literature and philosophy I think (.) well
 910 she's older than me and well I'm (.) that
 911 made me think well I'm I'm not alone
 912 Alan: yeah
 913 Matteo: well the other students in my classroom
 914 (are not so:) well they're they're very
 915 kind a:nd i: just don't feel the gap
 916 between us (our ages)
 917 Alan: hm
 918 Matteo: (xx) they make me feel younger
 919 ((laughs)) yes
 920 Alan: hm yes ((laughs)) so generally the age
 921 gap the competition has changed
 922 Matteo: yes yes (.) it has changed (the
 923 competitiveness has changed with the
 924 mediation classes) and the: (..) and the
 925 gap between me and the other students
 926 well it has changed with the with the
 927 time I think
 928 Alan: hm
 929 Matteo: even though there are some episodes of
 930 hm: (..) students well during the german
 931 classes well (.) one day er we were
 932 attending a german class it was letterato
 933 and well i: (..) i: started studying german
 934 as a beg- as a beginner I (..) I just (...)
 935 yes I never heard (...) anything in
 936 german before (.) and well erm this
 937 student well I we were in aula nuova (.)
 938 and this student just came late and
 939 during the lesson she missed a thing I
 940 don't remember what it was but a:nd
 941 well she looked at me er I was I was

942 sitting in front of her and so she needed
 943 to ask a thing and she looked at me and
 944 said oh well what about what about (..)
 945 oh well never mind ((mimics student
 946 giving up on a question)) she asked to
 947 the students to the students sitting next
 948 to me
 949 Alan: hmm
 950 Matteo: and that was because I was a beginner (.)
 951 and then: i: had (3.0) I know that it was
 952 because this is my second bachelor
 953 degree and so I took the place of another
 954 student er: (.) that was not graduated that
 955 wanted to get in the SSLMIT and so I
 956 already have a bachelor degree the other
 957 student (therefore) who couldn't get in
 958 the SSLMIT well (.) they: erm (.) they
 959 (...) they graduated from the high school
 960 can I say that
 961 Alan: well they finished high school
 962 Matteo: ok yes (.) a:nd and so I know that she
 963 was angry=
 964 Alan: =how? How did you know this?
 965 Matteo: ah: the other people told me told me
 966 that (.) I talked with with this student (.)
 967 with the with this person (..) and well
 968 she said no no no I'm sorry: but well you
 969 know (..) and that's it
 970 Alan: but why did you so: I mean it seems like
 971 a short quick scene where she asked and
 972 oh no never mind=
 973 Matteo: =yes
 974 Alan: why did this become so (.) important for
 975 you (.) why did you (.) investigate

976 Matteo: ah: because it was just one episode (.)
 977 but (.) there were many episodes during
 978 the er: the first semester
 979 Alan: with ?
 980 Matteo: with this with this girl
 981 Alan: only this girl?
 982 Matteo: ah: with this girl a:nd yes in with this
 983 girl in particular in particular but well
 984 during the first semester I:: (.) I feel this
 985 (3.0) I could feel that they were quite
 986 surprised about my: presence
 987 Alan: why surprised? Because they knew
 988 about your past?
 989 Matteo: because the:: er (..) well because they
 990 (4.0) this is their first university for them
 991 and so I think they: (...) they didn't
 992 imagine that a student could get another
 993 second bache- another bachelor degree
 994 Alan: hm m
 995 Matteo: if he wanted (.) and so they were qui- (..)
 996 some students were quite surprised (..)
 997 and e:::rm
 998 Alan: told you personally?
 999 Matteo: yes (.) yes
 1000 Alan: when they found out?
 1001 Matteo: yes yeah well I think during the the:
 1002 er:m I think during the first classes (..)
 1003 yes
 1004 Alan: and how did you feel when they reacted
 1005 in this way
 1006 Matteo: no i:: (4.0) I was curious about their
 1007 reaction because it was something that i:
 1008 (...) had never seen before a:nd (...) but
 1009 I was just curious

1010 Alan: (..) never seen before because [you've
 1011 Matteo: [yes
 1012 Alan: never been in that situation=
 1013 Matteo: =yes ((laughs)) and I think this will be
 1014 the uni- situation the: (3.0)
 1015 Alan: [but you said your friends
 1016 Matteo:[(xxx)
 1017 Alan: your friends were surprised when you
 1018 said you wanted to do another degree at
 1019 SSLMIT (.) so=
 1020 Matteo: =yes
 1021 Alan: perhaps the reaction of the students at
 1022 SSLMIT when you arrived you had in
 1023 someway prepared you in some way for
 1024 that reaction?
 1025 Matteo: m: not so much because because he i:
 1026 (...) I know this student and we have the
 1027 same strong passion and so he: imagined
 1028 that I would have gotten another
 1029 bachelor degree (..) er because i: my:
 1030 will was (.) was very strong and it was
 1031 the only way to become an interpreter
 1032 cos I couldn't do the entry test for the
 1033 magistrale because i: (.) I didn't know
 1034 german French or Spanish or another
 1035 second language
 1036 Alan: right
 1037 Matteo: another European language (.)
 1038 Alan: so you decided to start from the
 1039 beginning
 1040 Matteo: yes (.) well i: (...) I know that I i: could
 1041 have studied interpreting in England I
 1042 think (.) in leeds and you can become an
 1043 interpreter between English and

1044 Japanese but they just accept (..) mother
 1045 tongues Japanese mother tongues (.) and
 1046 so on
 1047 Alan: hmm (.)
 1048 Matteo: yes it m: (..) and I know that you just
 1049 don't well 2 foreign languages are not
 1050 enough (..) and at least (.) another
 1051 European language I think (.) it's it's
 1052 essential (..)
 1053 Alan: hm (...)
 1054 Matteo: and so here I am
 1055 Alan: right (.) and just finally your thoughts
 1056 for the future? Considering you're now
 1057 coming to the end of your first year (.)
 1058 how do you see the future developing?
 1059 Matteo: well next year I will be in germany (.)
 1060 and well I hope I will I will improve my
 1061 german (3.0) a::n well (..) er: I just don't
 1062 think about the future (.) so much (.) so
 1063 so often well I know: I will try to get in
 1064 the: (...) in the magistrale here in forli or
 1065 in Trieste or in germany when I will
 1066 finish the: this er:::
 1067 Alan: degree
 1068 Matteo: special degree this bachelor degree (.)
 1069 but I know I will try the entry test and
 1070 well I'm just enjoying my time here now
 1071 here in forli I will enjoy my time in
 1072 germany next year and I will study
 1073 Alan: hm so this passion to become an
 1074 interpreter (.) can we say that it's not
 1075 central at the moment?
 1076 Matteo: no no (.) it's it's central (...) i just think
 1077 that i just think i am on the right path (...)

1078 well I was more afraid when I graduated
 1079 the first time because I wanted to
 1080 become an interpreter but I i: 've never
 1081 studied well no I 've never (.) I have
 1082 never studied interpreting (.) a:nd i:
 1083 didn't know if i: could have m: (..) if (.)
 1084 the entry test would have gone well or
 1085 not
 1086 Alan: hm
 1087 Matteo:(.) a:nd but now I'm (..) I'm here in the
 1088 in the Sslmit and I'm I think I'm I'm just
 1089 on the right path and so I'm more (...) er:
 1090 (.) not at ease (.) but er: I'm more
 1091 confident
 1092 Alan: has that got anything to do with
 1093 professor moscato who said (.) now that
 1094 you are here (..) you are future
 1095 interpreters or is that just me not
 1096 interpreting correctly ((small laugh))
 1097 Matteo:((laughs))
 1098 Alan: cos we started with this idea that if you
 1099 are HERE you will be an interpreter and
 1100 now you seem to be quite content
 1101 Matteo: yes
 1102 Alan: and relaxed perhaps=
 1103 Matteo: =yes I'm quite relaxed=
 1104 Alan: = is that related to people like moscato
 1105 saying these things or is it something
 1106 different perhaps?
 1107 Matteo: (3.0) hm: yes something has changed er
 1108 (4.0) because i: have seen that studying
 1109 to become an interpreter ah: brings you a
 1110 lot of stress (.) but I'm just doing my
 1111 best a:nd I'm in the right place so: (3.0)

1112 I'm just taking it easy (3.0) and that's it
 1113 I'm: (...) my my passion is the same (.) i:
 1114 (...) I spend many hours studying an-
 1115 (...) and so I'm just quite I'm quite
 1116 relaxed
 1117 Alan: cos you said hard work was=
 1118 Matteo: =yes I was quite I was afraid during the
 1119 first semester I was afraid because I've
 1120 never studied german before and so just
 1121 study here in the SSLMIT well I know
 1122 that i: can't improve my german so
 1123 much and so when I won the erasmus
 1124 scholarship well the things were more
 1125 relaxed in general
 1126 Alan: so that was an important turning point=
 1127 Matteo: =yes yes wining the erasmus wining the
 1128 erasmus scholarship was one of the: (.)
 1129 one of the most important things during
 1130 the first year
 1131 Alan: what does what does scholarship mean
 1132 in this case I'm not sure I understand
 1133 Matteo: I'm I will spend next year in germ- in
 1134 germany and well I will get a
 1135 scholarship so I will get money and
 1136 that's important too because er: (...)
 1137 Alan: lots of money or:
 1138 Matteo: (...) 280 euros per month
 1139 Alan: hm but not everybody gets this?
 1140 Matteo: no
 1141 Alan: how do you think you got it?
 1142 Matteo: (..) the: the scholarship?
 1143 Alan: hm
 1144 Matteo: well we did an application and then
 1145 there was a there was a list of students

1146 a:nd from the first one to the last one
1147 well the (..) the difference was the
1148 number of credits that the student got
1149 with the exam with the exams he or she
1150 passed and and the scores a:nd so we
1151 just did the applications the students
1152 chose the: the city (..) the country and the
1153 city for I could choose for example
1154 England or germany well all the all the
1155 countries in europe well you just choose
1156 the country that speaks where people
1157 speak the language you study and so it
1158 was a very important thing because the
1159 opportunity of winning the erasmus
1160 scholarship the overseas here at the
1161 SSLMIT is one of the things is one of
1162 the things that make this university
1163 important because erm the: classes are
1164 high level we have great professors er:
1165 up till now I'm (..) very satisfied with all
1166 the professors even though yes I can
1167 prefer the mediation the german
1168 mediation classes but the English classes
1169 the german classes and (..) even the other
1170 classes were high level (..) but (..) it's
1171 not enough if you want to become an
1172 interpreter you: well the: (your)
1173 language proficiency level is the first
1174 thing (...) a:nd I know that I have to
1175 improve my English infinitely but (.)
1176 well it's easier to: to:: for example to
1177 spend a month or two in England you
1178 can get a job my: (..) my knowledge of
1179 the english language is better than the

1180 german one (..) a:nd so it's very very
 1181 very important (x) the number of
 1182 scholarships here in the: here at the
 1183 SSLMIT I think the number is higher
 1184 than the number of the other universities
 1185 (...) erm because I think that at least (.)
 1186 60 (..) 70 percent of the students (.) er
 1187 win an eraz- er: a scholarship in german
 1188 Alan: you talked at one point german as a first
 1189 language german as a second language
 1190 there's jealousy er not jealously I'm I'm
 1191 mistaken (.) you were saying one of the
 1192 students said (.) you shouldn't
 1193 necessarily go for the big german
 1194 universities because you're just german
 1195 second language (..) do you remember
 1196 that? And and you said she said it's only
 1197 german first language that need to go to
 1198 the important universities
 1199 Matteo: yes
 1200 Alan: and you found that quite interesting
 1201 Matteo: yes
 1202 Alan: and now you have a (.) a scholarship
 1203 [to go to-
 1204 Matteo: [yeah
 1205 Alan: was there any reaction there from
 1206 these people?
 1207 Matteo: ye:s erm: during the receiving (ours)
 1208 hours hours of the our erasmus co-
 1209 ordinator of the: (.) erm of the co-
 1210 ordinator of the german of the germany
 1211 a:::nd (...) well of germany in general (.)
 1212 erm well there were 2 or 3 students of
 1213 german first language and well sh- they

1214 were very angry because students of
 1215 german as second language won
 1216 scholarships for hidelberg er: wien
 1217 ((vienna in german)) er: (germasheim?)
 1218 and these are all and munchen and these
 1219 are all 4 of the hm: 4 great universities
 1220 for interpreters and they were very angry
 1221 because they they said it's not possible
 1222 we are german first language (.) well our
 1223 language proficiency is better than (.)
 1224 er: than second lang- than students of (.)
 1225 than the proficiency of students of
 1226 german as second language (.) and well
 1227 and what surprised me (.) is that the (.)
 1228 even the professor said well it's been (.)
 1229 you're right it's not possible (.) because
 1230 she because he: he: thought that (.) well
 1231 (...) it's right he as- he assumed that the
 1232 language proficiency of the student of
 1233 the second of the student of german as
 1234 second language was m: infer- inferior?
 1235 ((incredulous tone))
 1236 Alan: hm
 1237 Matteo: of the: (.) of the proficiency of the: than
 1238 the proficiency of the student of the
 1239 german as a first language (.) and I
 1240 think it's quite crazy because (.) the:
 1241 professor moscato said that (.) our level
 1242 was higher (.) than german first language
 1243 (.) so (.) and there was another episode
 1244 that was I think it was quite quite funny
 1245 because (.) well to: apply for the:
 1246 scholarship you: have to certify a B1
 1247 level (.)

1248 Alan: hm m

1249 Matteo: and so I had to certify a B1 level in

1250 german language (..) but I was a

1251 beginner a:nd (..) and this professor got

1252 well I I wrote him an e-mail saying that

1253 well (.) last year the things were not this

1254 way the things were different (.) WHY?

1255 now you well why now want a B1

1256 language when I will leave in

1257 September ? there's plenty of time for

1258 improving and he said no: it's not

1259 possible because our reputation is high

1260 and we can't send beginners to german

1261 ok but (.) there's plenty of time if we are

1262 here I think that it means we want to

1263 study we want to improve we: (..) well

1264 and (.) I didn't say (.) the thing that I

1265 will say now but (.) I thought that this is

1266 my second bachelor degree (.) I want to

1267 study because there are not so many

1268 students who er just get a second

1269 bachelor degree if I'm here it's because I

1270 want to study I want to improve I want

1271 to learn german (.) a:nd and well and but

1272 well I studied I got the B1 level I applied i:

1273 (.) I won the scholarship the professor said

1274 oh (.) you did it (.) yes I did it (.) a:nd (.)

1275 well now he's very kind he's very great

1276 person and but the other students are ve:ry

1277 angry very very angry (.)

1278 Alan: is this one of the students who said you

1279 shouldn't go to?=
 1280 Matteo: ye:s

1281 Alan: so you know these people quite well
 1282 now?
 1283 Matteo: yes
 1284 Alan: But there are more of them
 1285 Matteo: yes
 1286 Alan: you find this (.) how do you find this
 1287 experience of being judged as inferior (.)
 1288 by the sound of things
 1289 Matteo: ah: I just don't I just don't think about it
 1290 I: well what's important to me was going
 1291 to germany and (..) and that's it (..) I just
 1292 found it funny (..) just that
 1293 Alan: so it's not just a question of age?
 1294 Matteo: no: I don't think so
 1295 no (3.0) no yes be- because yes it's just
 1296 it's not a matter of age they're (6.0)
 1297 that's just the way
 1298 the SSLMIT sha- the SSLMIT shapes
 1299 you
 1300 Alan: m: (2.00) that a very ge- broad
 1301 generalisation because you did say that
 1302 german [(xx)
 1303 Matteo: [yes
 1304 Alan: from
 1305 Matteo: yes but the em things have changed but
 1306 the (...) competitiveness remains not as
 1307 the (.) the fir- the first semester but well
 1308 it's just in our (blood)
 1309 Alan: is it still more in the german or in
 1310 general i:n
 1311 Matteo: in generally in general
 1312 Alan: I see so similar problems in English? Or
 1313 similar situations?

1314 Matteo: yes but er:m (3.0) there weren't
 1315 episodes showing this
 1316 Alan: ah:
 1317 Matteo: (...) so: (.) I cannot say that
 1318 Alan: (...) there weren't episodes? So how did
 1319 you realise it?
 1320 Matteo: (...) well this erm: (..)
 1321 Alan: if there's nothing concrete (..) in german
 1322 it was obviously quite concrete
 1323 Matteo: ok
 1324 Alan: and English?
 1325 Matteo: (.) in English during the:: well during
 1326 the classes er: while: but just during the
 1327 first semester because er: m (...) you just
 1328 (2.0) you could feel that (..) there was
 1329 that the other students was looking
 1330 around them seeing oh that that that
 1331 student knows more things than me: yes
 1332 but his pronunciation is a complete
 1333 disaster bu:t but he: he has a good
 1334 grammar ahh (.) you could feel that
 1335 Alan: you could FEEL all of that?
 1336 Matteo: yes ye:s during the classes of mr
 1337 steedman during the error analysis
 1338 during the reformulation (.) yes yes
 1339 Alan: j- just curious how can you feel all of
 1340 that? A lot of [interpretation
 1341 Matteo:[it's just a matter
 1342 of behaviour and well now I cannot
 1343 mention the episodes cos they are passed
 1344 Alan: hm
 1345 Matteo: but it's not just my opinion (.) er: (...)
 1346 even when I talk with my friends here in
 1347 forli well (...) it's something true (.) but

1348 now everything has changed (.) thanks to
 1349 the mediation cos now things are
 1350 difficult now we have to co-operate (..)
 1351 you just you: you just can't move on
 1352 alone (.) no you just need to help and
 1353 you need help (2.0) yes
 1354 Alan: so the mediation situation
 1355 Matteo: yes
 1356 Alan: has created more
 1357 Matteo: yes
 1358 Alan: unification
 1359 Matteo: yes (.) co-operation (..) yes and I am
 1360 satisfied I'm really satisfied (..) well I
 1361 think it's normal that you prefer one
 1362 class and not another one but I'm really
 1363 satisfied with all the classes the English
 1364 and the german ones (..) as well yes I am
 1365 very satisfied even with the professors I
 1366 ca:n (2.0) not judge because I don't like
 1367 this verb but (..) erm: I can notice erm
 1368 several things about the about the
 1369 lessons but it's just my opinion
 1370 and I'm just an ignorant I just don't
 1371 know how to teach I just don't know
 1372 what to teach so: (.) it's just my opinion
 1373 just talking
 1374 R: hm
 1375 M: and that's it but (.) I'm (..) very satisfied
 1376 (2.0)
 1377 R: great thank you very much for that
 1378 M: you are welcome

Rosa 2: Second interview

- 1 Alan: so rosa it's just a (.) a little update
2 on what's been going on (.) in
3 your life (.) recently (.) in the last
4 term erm: (.) just you can tell me
5 anything you like I mean what's
6 happened in the last months at the
7 end of towards the end of the
8 course
- 9 Rosa: but how: my languages have
10 improved or: what ((laughs))
- 11 Alan: you're experiences in general
12 here
- 13 Rosa: ahh my experiences I think the
14 courses have become a lot harder
15 so ((small laugh)) so: yeah I
16 mean I'm studying almost all the
17 time now (.) I became a nerd
18 finally ((laughs))
- 19 Alan: I was going to say it ((both
20 laugh))
- 21 Rosa: yeah I'm studying I think all the
22 time (.) I'm I'm studying in the
23 library till 10 kinda until it's
24 closing but I mean they're all so
25 I'm enjoying but there are a lot so
26 it can be really hard
- 27 Alan: hm (..) you're studying for (.)
28 particular languages?
- 29 Rosa: em::::: for the mediation for the
30 Italian part but not the English
31 part I also have to start the

32 English part but I didn't have
 33 time for that and also the
 34 literature because they have
 35 changed the teachers so we have
 36 to do like 2 course we're it's
 37 kinda like we're doing 2 courses
 38 so for 6 I think credits we're
 39 doing we have to read about (.) 7
 40 books I think
 41 Alan: 7 books?
 42 Rosa: yeah it's a bit hard (.) so all the
 43 time I'm doing that either the
 44 Italian parts of mediation or:
 45 translating because we have the
 46 first exam on 23rd which is
 47 translating yeah
 48 Alan: translating from?
 49 Rosa: I have both because I didn't pass
 50 also the first one but the others
 51 only have from Italian to English
 52 (.) I have in the morning Italian to
 53 English and in the evening
 54 English to Italian
 55 Alan: right (2.0) this a problem for you
 56 you said in our initial conversation
 57 Rosa: ah yeah: the Italian part it's like
 58 it's a bit difficult for me but (.) I
 59 think I'm I'm like getting used to
 60 it understanding how it works
 61 now bit better but still need lots
 62 of time lots of works
 63 Alan: hm the Italian bit but is the
 64 English ok then?

65 Rosa: ah: also that because I think my
66 English is better than my Italian
67 still but still have difficulty for
68 understanding the Italian part so:
69 I don't know how to translate it
70 into English (.) bu:t (2.0)

71 Alan: because when we were talking
72 the first in the one to one you said
73 that you have 5 languages

74 Rosa: yeah

75 Alan: whereas the majority of people
76 only have three

77 Rosa: yeah

78 Alan: one of your problems was that (.)
79 at least one of the translation or
80 interpreting languages was into
81 your native language (.) or Italian
82 or English (.) but you had this
83 problem didn't you?

84 Rosa: yeah yeah ((small laugh))

85 Alan: yeah how has that developed?

86 Rosa: e:r I think my Italian is
87 improving a lot more so I'm
88 get- becoming like I'm feeling
89 (.) first I was feeling that
90 English like if I have to choose
91 one take it as my native
92 language I'd have chosen
93 English but maybe like living
94 here in Italy I'm becoming more
95 used to Italian so: (.) it's still
96 hard but ((small laugh))

97 Alan: so your Italian it's stronger now
98 your Italian

99 Rosa: yeah I'm trying like to only
 100 listen to italian music watching
 101 Italian series so
 102 Alan: oh right because in (.) you
 103 talked about falling in love with
 104 English because of friends ((the
 105 american sitcom))
 106 Rosa: yeah ((laughs))
 107 Alan: and now wha- what programmes are
 108 you watching in Italian?
 109 Rosa: hm: I'm watching everything
 110 like er dubbed dubbed in translated in
 111 Italian but like American series
 112 again
 113 Alan: right
 114 Rosa: game of thrones in Italian they're
 115 a bit strange but ((small laugh))
 116 Alan: are you finding that particularly
 117 difficult then Italian version of (.)
 118 game of thrones?
 119 Rosa: er: no I don't know why always
 120 my: I think my good my strong (..)
 121 thing is understanding I can
 122 understand good but (.) erm like
 123 talking sometimes it's a bit
 124 difficult but understanding no it's
 125 (xx) easy
 126 Alan: hm (.) cos you said you also have
 127 problems with colloquial Italian
 128 the modo da dire ((Italian
 129 translation))
 130 Rosa: hm in writing ((laughs))
 131 Alan: a ha has that improved then do
 132 you think?

133 Rosa: erm ((laughs)) a bit maybe yeah
 134 Alan: (3.0) are you confident then about
 135 Rosa: I'm still not a hundred percent but (.) bit
 136 more
 137 Alan: yeah (..) and what about the
 138 class- classroom atmosphere (.)
 139 has that changed? over the last
 140 term (.) is it
 141 Rosa: erm (2.0) I don't know ((small
 142 laugh)) er (...) I think maybe now
 143 that only that everybody is only
 144 studying but (..) it's it's Sslmit
 145 so: I was expecting that ((small
 146 laugh))
 147 Alan: cos you said that when you came
 148 here first you (..) you thought that
 149 the students here they were as
 150 you said ner:ds
 151 Rosa: ((laughs)) well now that I have
 152 became another nerd so ((laughs))
 153 maybe I am getting along better
 154 Alan: yeah?
 155 Rosa: yeah th- (..) yeah they kinda
 156 study a lot but once a day once a
 157 week also go out and have fun so
 158 (.) I think that the erm (.)
 159 atmosphere here like the students
 160 is really it's really good (.)
 161 everybody like tries to help each
 162 other out and if you ask
 163 somebody help they help you it's
 164 not like it's not a bad er
 165 competition (2.0)

166 Alan: do you think the atmosphere in
 167 general is still very positive?
 168 Rosa: yeah I think it's really positive
 169 Alan: yeah (.) has anybody complained
 170 about anything which you (.) you
 171 agree with? do you think m:
 172 Rosa: (.) not that I can think of ((small
 173 laugh))
 174 Alan: (..) so you're very positive in
 175 general=
 176 Rosa: yeah I'm very positive (..)
 177 Alan: yeah (.) and erm: you said that
 178 erm: you know (...) one of the
 179 teachers was talking about
 180 becoming an interpreter is very
 181 stressing
 182 Rosa: hm yeah
 183 Alan: and erm you questioned whether
 184 (.) it was a- if she should have
 185 been an interpreter? Do you think
 186 it's still sort of very stressing this
 187 idea of becoming an interpreter?
 188 Rosa: erm kinda a bit yeah but on the
 189 other hand because like we're
 190 looking at every subject so much
 191 that for example we were doing
 192 for the german we were doing
 193 only food for 3 months so I feel
 194 really confidence about that now
 195 food in general also in Italian also
 196 in English we were doing
 197 everything like foods so after
 198 working that much on that
 199 ambient I think (.) if somebody

200 works in that ambient it can be it
 201 cannot not be that difficult if can
 202 be like it's possible so
 203 Alan: hm (..) because you were also
 204 talking about the lack of books
 205 for learning languages and you
 206 preferred books
 207 Rosa: yeah
 208 Alan: has that changed in anyway?
 209 Rosa: er: now we're going lots of
 210 glossaries so: (.) i have for the
 211 English I needed some books
 212 now I have about 20 pages of
 213 glossaries so ((laughs)) (.) I think
 214 it's good (.) it's enough
 215 Alan: hm but learning the language like
 216 german cos you said was you you
 217 had a very low level in german
 218 Rosa: yeah
 219 Alan: and has that I mean how do you
 220 think the course has progressed
 221 this year?
 222 Rosa: er well we have to work ourself
 223 they told us that from the
 224 beginning that it would be very
 225 hard for you starting from zero
 226 because everybody else have
 227 started like from for 5 6 years the
 228 german but you have to choose it
 229 yourself so I chose it and I was
 230 studying all the time german also
 231 (.) and so I finished 2 or 3 books
 232 myself now I think I got into a
 233 good level and also in the

234 summer I'm going to germany
 235 for 5 months so after that I think
 236 (.) I'll be able to talk
 237 Alan: (...) but you have to work a lot to
 238 Rosa: yeah a lot ((small laugh))
 239 Alan: is it more than you expected?
 240 Rosa: erm a bit yeah becau:se erm i: it
 241 was (.) we also had to do the
 242 mediation also for me I had to do
 243 it from Italian to german and
 244 german into Italian so I didn't
 245 know which one which part to
 246 concentrate so: I was
 247 concentrating all the time in the
 248 german parts and one time I had
 249 to mediate and then I could do
 250 the german parts but I could not
 251 do the Italian parts so I was really
 252 shocked like that I've been here
 253 for 2 years and I couldn't say
 254 really m: easy parts and so I had
 255 to also concentrate on the Italian
 256 try to like memorise the
 257 glossaries from both ways and (.)
 258 er but now it was really stressing
 259 it was really stressful because I
 260 had to I wanted to do it and (.)
 261 june the exam bu:t now I have
 262 decided I will do it on September
 263 so: now it's ok ((small laugh))
 264 Alan: hm
 265 Rosa: after 5 months being in germany
 266 maybe

267 Alan: cos you were in germany for 5
 268 months?
 269 Rosa: no no I'm gonna go for 5 months
 270 Alan: go (.) ok (.) but you were talking
 271 about being at a disadvantage I
 272 think you said because most
 273 people either speak Italian or they
 274 are
 275 Rosa: yeah
 276 Alan: very fluent in english you thought
 277 you were at a disadvantage I
 278 believe
 279 Rosa: yeah yeah
 280 Alan: how do you feel now about that?
 281 Rosa: I still feel I am disadvantaged but
 282 I think maybe like after some
 283 years I will be able to ((small
 284 laugh)) become like the one of
 285 them but (.) right now yeah (.)
 286 still it's (.) a bit hard
 287 Alan: cos you did talk about you know
 288 people like professor rutland (.)
 289 sort of made you positive (.) or
 290 think positively about the
 291 potential to be (..) native speaker
 292 like
 293 Rosa: hm
 294 Alan: hm
 295 Rosa: yeah
 296 Alan: how has that (.) progressed in
 297 your mind?
 298 Rosa: erm ((laughs)) it still needs time
 299 ((laughs)) but yeah I think now
 300 maybe it's possible

301 Alan: so thinking back to when we we
 302 talked the first time
 303 (.) I mean do you think you have
 304 changed in your opinion towards
 305 (.) the languages you are studying?
 306 Rosa: yeah for example I changed
 307 Chinese into Arabic
 308 Alan: oh
 309 Rosa: ((laughs)) yeah I thought that it's
 310 not possible and I'm gonna leave
 311 French I'm gonna (.) lasciare?
 312 ((small laugh))
 313 Alan: leave French yeah
 314 Rosa: leave French also next year so
 315 I'm gonna concentrate only on
 316 English Italian a.nd german
 317 Alan: ok can you explain the reasons
 318 for this [change
 319 Rosa: [it was too much chinese
 320 was not possible because (.) I like
 321 the language a lot but it took a lot
 322 of times and I the thing I don't
 323 have here is time so: (.) I saw that
 324 I cannot continue with Chinese so
 325 I changed into Arabic because
 326 it's really similar to my language
 327 my mother tongue and also we
 328 had to study Arabic for 6 years in
 329 iran so (.) everything that they are
 330 teaching now they are the same
 331 things that I had studied (.) I
 332 don't like the language I hate it
 333 always the language bu:t (.) at
 334 least it's something less (.) so=

335 Alan: less to study
 336 Rosa: (.) yeah
 337 Alan: why don't you like the language?
 338 Rosa: ahh it's really complicated but I
 339 think it's like because of the
 340 history of the countries (.) in iran
 341 nobody likes it to be honest (.)
 342 you are like forced to study it all
 343 the time and from the second
 344 from first year of high school we
 345 were forced to have the courses (.)
 346 it was kinda like lat- latin that
 347 here where everybody studies it
 348 we were we had the Arabic but (.)
 349 erm we have like politic
 350 problems with arabs and
 351 everything so
 352 Alan: hm
 353 Rosa: and also I think it's not really a
 354 pretty language (..) but I'm trying
 355 to like it cos I have to ((laughs))
 356 Alan: (..) erm you're trying to like it (.)
 357 is that (.) why are you trying to
 358 like it?
 359 Rosa: cos I know in the future I have to
 360 work with it if I I choose to
 361 become an interpreter (.) maybe
 362 it's an advantage for me also
 363 because I think can get better in
 364 Arabic than the others because
 365 it's really similar to my mother
 366 tongue so (.) it can be a really
 367 good point for me so I have to
 368 just like it ((laughs))

369 Alan: yeah and what about the teaching
 370 of it what about the teacher I
 371 mean the experience in the
 372 classroom (.) with Arabic
 373 Rosa: erm: (..) like what? ((small laugh))
 374 Alan: is it a positive experience ? do
 375 you like the teaching meth- the
 376 teaching methods the teaching
 377 style?
 378 Rosa: ah (.) he (.) the teacher's really
 379 slow so: I don't know in which
 380 level they're gonna we're gonna
 381 become but (..) I don't know also
 382 because it's a bit weird for me cos
 383 I always (studied it) from Persian
 384 to Arabic now from Italian to
 385 Arabic so sometimes it's a bit
 386 weird and it's like more
 387 complicated from Italian to Arabic
 388 (..) bu:t (.) to be honest I went to
 389 the classes only 2 times so ((small
 390 laugh)) I don't know that much
 391 also
 392 Alan: only 2
 393 Rosa: yeah like I had studied all these
 394 things like for example they were
 395 studying how to write the alphabet
 396 which is the same in Persian so I
 397 didn't need to go and then other
 398 things that I had studied so
 399 Alan: so it's an easy option for you
 400 Rosa: yeah I choose it only for that (.)
 401 like now I feel it's just three
 402 languages not Arabic because I

403 think in the third year maybe the
 404 level will be the level that I am
 405 now so (3.0)
 406 Alan: hm (.) so just to re-cap you've
 407 dropped Chinese
 408 Rosa: yeah
 409 Alan: and you've taken up Arabic and (.)
 410 Rosa: ah French because I thought that I
 411 will finish this year but I will
 412 drop it next year (..) also
 413 Alan: why?
 414 Rosa: ah it's too hard to keep up with
 415 all the languages so I think it's
 416 better to concentrate on one and
 417 then like learn it better than like
 418 taking up lots of languages and
 419 not being able to talk all of them
 420 Alan: hm (...) what do you think about
 421 you're future as an interpreter
 422 now?
 423 Rosa: ahh I have no idea I mean I think
 424 it's something a bit hard but (.)
 425 I'm positive about it I like
 426 becoming an interpreter but (.) I
 427 would also like to work in a
 428 company or something like that
 429 like I don't know business
 430 woman something like that
 431 Alan: hm m (.) where?
 432 Rosa: mm I have no idea ((laughs)) (.) I
 433 would like to work with
 434 languages but it's I'm not going
 435 to stay only with language only
 436 become an interpreter (xx) I like

437 to travel a lot know lots of
 438 different people and erm talk
 439 different languages so (..) I think
 440 I need to find something that I
 441 would like (...)
 442 Alan: are you unhappy about having to
 443 leave Chinese and French?
 444 Rosa: erm: Chinese a bit yeah cos i: (.)
 445 both ((small laugh)) yeah Chinese
 446 I really like it and I found out that
 447 it's not possible because it's
 448 really really har:d (.) like it is
 449 possible but it needs time a really
 450 lot of time maybe if I become (.)
 451 my Italian or my english become
 452 really good and then I would
 453 have time I would choose that
 454 again but right now no: and also
 455 French m: (..) I will be sad to
 456 leave it because I studied French
 457 for about 6 years before coming
 458 here and then for 2 years I did not
 459 study at all and now that I'm
 460 studying again it's I have
 461 forgotten everything so: (.) now I
 462 am remembering again
 463 everything but now I have to drop
 464 it again so it's all the time
 465 becoming like zero becoming
 466 again good at it (it's a bit hard) (.)
 467 but I thought I will go and live
 468 there for some months maybe
 469 next year (.) it depen- I think the

470 best way is living in the country
 471 to learn the language so
 472 Alan: hm (.) so what about studying
 473 here (.) what's the point?
 474 Rosa: ((both laugh)) erm concentrating
 475 on the other languages (...)
 476 Alan: Italian obviously=
 477 Rosa: =yeah
 478 Alan: cos you're living in Italy
 479 Rosa: also German also English
 480 Alan: yeah (...) you also said about
 481 interpreting being er you said one
 482 of the negative things is you
 483 didn't express your own opinions
 484 (.) one of your friends=
 485 Rosa: =yeah
 486 Alan: said this was something that was
 487 negative about it (.) but you were
 488 inspired by the film the
 489 interpreter
 490 Rosa: not any more ((laughs))
 491 Alan: oh tell me what happened?
 492 Rosa: ah I don't know I mean (...) to
 493 work in the UN it's not possible
 494 and I don't even want to I mean
 495 it's lots of stress I don't want to
 496 have a life that too much stressful
 497 so (.) I'm like (.) I mean (.) I don-
 498 I right now I don't have any idea
 499 what I'd like to do but (.) I know
 500 only something with languages I
 501 would like to do that but not but
 502 not something rea:lly stressful
 503 (...)

504 Alan: so why did you change your mind?
 505 Rosa: er all- maybe because also of the
 506 things that our german teacher
 507 said about it being so: stressful so:
 508 (.) em (.) I don't want to have a
 509 live a life like that so (...)
 510 Alan: the german teacher was that the
 511 teacher who talked about how
 512 they had to be two people at once
 513 Rosa: yeah yeah yeah
 514 Alan: so you you agree with=
 515 Rosa: =yeah like working for (.) like (.)
 516 really important people it could
 517 be like she always says that she
 518 had interpreted also for the po:pe
 519 for the er Berlusconi and people
 520 like that that's one of the reason
 521 that when she tells us stories
 522 she's always (this thing like)
 523 yeah I was so stressed because of
 524 that and I don't want to have that
 525 kind of responsibility (...) I'd
 526 rather like work in some
 527 company (..)
 528 Alan: hm (.) wh- what sort of company?
 529 Rosa: ah (.) I have no idea ((laughs))
 530 (...)
 531 Alan: would you say that your sort of
 532 your goals have changed
 533 Rosa: yeah
 534 Alan: since we last talked
 535 Rosa: yeah a bit yes (...)
 536 Alan: so what=
 537 Rosa: =maybe I became more realistic

538 Alan: hm and what would you say
539 made you become more realistic?
540 Rosa: erm: (...) maybe also seeing
541 other people seeing other students
542 (.) cos there are people like have
543 are bilingual or er trilingual? And
544 so em I think they would have
545 more chance like of becoming I
546 mean it would be better if they
547 become something (.) like
548 working in the UN people like
549 people like them have
550 to work there now (.) erm (.) I
551 don't know ((small laugh))
552 Alan: so you think you have to be (..)
553 bilingual from an early age?
554 Rosa: yeah=
555 Alan: =to to work in (.) but is that
556 because of the ability of the
557 person to speak the languages or
558 is it something to do with the
559 stress because you seem to be
560 suggesting that (.) it's very
561 stressful more than a question of
562 skill it's a question of stress
563 Rosa: it's both I think (3.0) ((small
564 laugh))
565 Alan: do you feel (..) how do you feel
566 in relation to the idea of changing
567 your goals? (..) from UN
568 interpreter to (..) a company
569 interpreter or a company
570 Rosa: m: (...) I don't know I mean
571 ((small laugh)) ye:s right now

572 I'm enjoying just learning and
 573 just going but I cannot say what I
 574 want to become (..) I like a lot of
 575 stuff so I need to think about
 576 them
 577 Alan: yeah (..) but it did seem to me
 578 you were thinking about
 579 (..) UN interpreter you said the
 580 film had inspired you=
 581 Rosa: =yeah I thought about it a bit
 582 but (.) I don't know ((small
 583 laugh)) (2.0) it seem like also
 584 because it's a goal that every
 585 everybody studying languages
 586 has so: it's a really hard thing to
 587 get (.) may- maybe there I might
 588 have the advantage of having
 589 persian as my mother tongue
 590 but (.) also on the other hand
 591 there are a lot of persian I think
 592 that are living er I don't know in
 593 America in English language so
 594 they have English as their
 595 mother tongue so
 596 Alan: hm
 597 Rosa: (3.0) I don't know it would be
 598 very difficult to get there because
 599 everyone wants them and I don't
 600 want to have that kinda stre:ss
 601 always in a competition
 602 Alan: hm (.) is that stress to get to the
 603 position [or
 604 Rosa: [bo:th
 605 Alan: in that position

606 Rosa: both I think both ((small laugh)) (2.0)

607 Alan: hm m (..) so I'm just trying to

608 understand (.) you (.) the idea of

609 being an interpreter has changed

610 (.) for you now you're thinking

611 more (.) something simpler less

612 stressing=

613 Rosa: =yeah

614 Alan: less competitive (3.0) and are you

615 happy with this?

616 Rosa: yeah yeah I'm happy with it (.)

617 maybe like an interpreter but not

618 an interpreter of UN

619 Alan: hm

620 Rosa: (.) a normal interpreter

621 Alan: so if you were offered a position

622 you wouldn't accept it?

623 Rosa: in the UN?

624 Alan: hm

625 Rosa: if they offer of course I would

626 ((laughs)) they will not offer me I

627 mean I won't go to try and get it

628 but if they come and offer me

629 ((laughs)) I won't say no

630 Alan: no? (..)

631 Rosa: (no it's)

632 Alan: (..)why?

633 Rosa: I don't know it could be a

634 experience maybe (..)

635 Alan: hm but if you don't try you'll

636 never know (2.0) so what's

637 stopping you from trying and

638 then discovering afterwards

639 Rosa: cos I don't think it's possible (.)
 640 yeah there are lots of students
 641 who who are better than me so: (.)
 642 and then (.) or like mother tongue
 643 like English Italian and bilingual
 644 so their much better than me so I
 645 don't think it will be possible so
 646 Alan: hm (..) so you think interpreting
 647 is (..) to be a good interpreter you
 648 just need to be bilingual?
 649 Rosa: no not just be bu:t if somebody is
 650 of course it's an advantage
 651 Alan: hm (3.0) so you don't think that
 652 there are other things that might
 653 make you a better interpreter than
 654 just being (..) mother tongue?
 655 Rosa: hm like what? ((laughs)) (..) I
 656 don't know (.) like wha:t?
 657 Alan: well we talked about talent last
 658 time
 659 Rosa: hm
 660 Alan: and there was this idea that talent
 661 is not necessarily (.) the only
 662 thing that counts also (.) hard
 663 work and practice (..) and
 664 perhaps the desire to get
 665 somewhere (.) and I don't know I
 666 can't remember (.) but I think a
 667 lot of people were saying it's not
 668 talent it's hard work (.) and [if
 669 you put the work in
 670 Rosa: [(I
 671 think it's both) I think that it's

672 both you need also to have the
673 talent
674 Alan: (.) hm but is that talent talent
675 because you're a native speaker
676 or talent because you're capable
677 of learning
678 Rosa: both also ((laughs))
679 Alan: hm (4.0) so I don't know I'm just
680 trying to understand because you
681 did seem to be quite I'm not
682 saying negative but [(xx)
683 Rosa: [yeah I was
684 in the last I was kinda negative (.)
685 now I'm a bit I'm more positive
686 maybe because I'm expecting
687 less from myself so: (.) and I'm
688 trying only to concentrate on
689 three language instead of five so
690 (.) I think that's good
691 Alan: so you're more positive because
692 you expect less of yourself?
693 Rosa: yes ((whispered)) ((laughs))
694 Alan: is that positive?
695 Rosa: erm I think yeah ((laughs))
696 maybe I was expecting too much
697 now I'm expecting something
698 like ((voice drops and slows))
699 something possible
700 Alan: ok let's just understand what
701 were you expecting before (.) that
702 you're not expecting now?
703 Rosa: erm like learning five languages
704 instead of three ((sing-song tone))
705 like more than anybody el:se and

706 learning as much as I can in the
 707 language lots of other languages
 708 also (if I would be able) and
 709 working in the UN working
 710 something (xx) having a really
 711 important job (..) now I'm
 712 expecting I would like to only m:
 713 choose three languages the three
 714 that I have chosen and make them
 715 perfect like not perfect (xxxx) but
 716 as good as they can a:nd I would
 717 also be happy to work as an-
 718 anything I like interpreting not
 719 translating I don't like translating
 720 at all er (.)
 721 Alan: why don't you like translating?
 722 Rosa: er ((small laugh)) I don't know
 723 I'm not good at writing I think I
 724 don't like that much writing (3.0)
 725 Alan: hm: can you be more specific
 726 what do you mean (.) you don't
 727 like writing
 728 Rosa: hm: (3.0) ((laughs)) I I don't
 729 know I don't like it just (.) I like
 730 writing for example something
 731 myself but translating finding the
 732 words then I am always like
 733 thinking if I can change them or
 734 if I cannot change them if I to
 735 only translate by wor- by words
 736 or if I change it right now would
 737 it be different and that I don't
 738 really like

739 Alan: (3.0) hm (.) I'm still interested to
740 know why you changed from
741 being (..) sort of thinking about
742 such high aspirations an
743 interpreter for the united nations
744 and to become some- someone
745 who seems quite content just to
746 work in an office perhaps or a
747 small company (.) wh- what
748 happened in the middle?

749 Rosa: ((laughs)) I saw the other
750 students (...)

751 Alan: you saw? Sorry

752 Rosa: other students I th- I saw that (.)
753 er I mean everybody is (study) I
754 thought ok so: erm you said talent
755 hard work but everybody here is
756 ha- is working really hard so (.)
757 the hard work is something that
758 everybody is doing (.) so then
759 there's talent and there's m:
760 mother tongue so (..) I saw the
761 competition I didn't expect this
762 much competition (.) so it's (.) I I
763 still think that if somebody wants
764 to and somebody works really
765 really hard can get it but I don't
766 want to it's too much stress it's
767 too much competition so (.)

768 Alan: can we talk about this
769 competition (.) what do you
770 mean by it too much competition

771 Rosa: I don't know there would only be
772 two places I think I I have no idea

773 but (.) I (.) think that there would
774 be something like that that they
775 would say that there's 2 or 3
776 places? So everybody wants to
777 get that place so: it is a
778 competition

779 Alan: which place?

780 Rosa: er in a jo- in a job or something
781 in a work in future

782 Alan: who said that there's only 2 or 3
783 places?

784 Rosa: there's not that much jobs so
785 ((laughs)) (there would be) it's
786 not like they would take every
787 student so for every I don't know
788 it would be hard to choose one
789 student over somebody else (3.0)

790 Alan: I'm just interested to know where
791 this information is coming from (.)
792 that there's only 2 or 3 places

793 Rosa: not 2 or 3 but still there's not that
794 much places (.) in the (works)

795 Alan: hm (.) only in the united nations

796 Rosa: (..) I have no idea but still that's
797 there won't be that much places (.)
798 and everybody wants to get it so:

799 Alan: (..) is this the sort of thing you've
800 heard in the classroom?

801 Rosa: yeah like talking to everybody
802 everybody's dream is becoming
803 is working there so (..) but also
804 like me nobody wants to continue
805 it (always) so (.)

806 Alan: nobody?

807 Rosa: not nobody but er: most of the
808 people say that yeah it's too
809 much difficult it's too much
810 stress so (.) it's just a dream (2.0)

811 Alan: I still want to know why so many
812 people have decided not to
813 pursue this dream

814 Rosa: hmm

815 Alan: what do you think is the reason?

816 Rosa: (4.0) m too much students too
817 much interpreter students (2.0)

818 Alan: well numbers doesn't necessarily
819 mean (..)

820 Rosa: too much good students so
821 ((laughs))

822 Alan: ah

823 Rosa: hm

824 Alan: (...) so are the people who are
825 saying this (.) or saying they
826 don't want to be interpreters at
827 the united nations any more (.)
828 the students you would consider
829 to be less (.) capable students?

830 Rosa: (.) m: no I think they're also good
831 but I don't know (.) it's (a little
832 less than bilinguals)

833 Alan: hm (..) so who are these bilingual
834 students? How do you define
835 bilingual in this context?

836 Rosa: (2.0) I don't know what do you
837 mean? ((laughs))

838 Alan: well wh- wh- you say there are
839 too many bilingual students (.)
840 but I'm trying to understand what

841 you understand as bilingual what
842 is bilingual for you?

843 Rosa: er having 2 or 3 languages as
844 mother tongue being capable of
845 talking like speaking those
846 languages with the proper accent
847 with like knowing all the words
848 well not all the words but all the
849 necessary words (xxx)

850 Alan: but are these people (..) have they
851 got have they been brought up in
852 the countries they have mothers
853 or fathers speak the languages?
854 Or are they just very very gifted
855 people in your opinion

856 Rosa: ah most of them the ones that I
857 met they were for example in one
858 country till 7 or 8 years old and
859 then they went to another country
860 or they had er for example
861 English family and they were
862 living in italy so (..) (stuff) like
863 that

864 Alan: hm (.) so you would say that most
865 people are put off being top
866 interpreters because they think
867 the competition by bilinguals
868 students is too high

869 Rosa: ah the others I don't know I
870 didn't ask them they just also
871 think it's too hard (..) not possible

872 Alan: hm (3.0) what happen- any
873 particular incidents or episodes in

874 the classroom that have really
875 enforced this idea for you?
876 Rosa: erm (.) no the only the only teacher
877 who also says that it's really hard
878 to become an interpreter is the one
879 the german one who is also an
880 interpreter but other than her no no
881 (.) but also yah wait to be honest
882 when I talk to other teachers about
883 interpreting they all says it's too
884 much stress I talked with professor
885 infanti so I asked her if she had
886 ever interpreted and she told me
887 that she had mediated for some
888 years but then it was too hard too
889 stressful so (.) she quit it
890 Alan: why was it too stressful did she
891 say why?
892 Rosa: er she said that like m: (..)
893 something like people could not
894 understand like they were saying
895 like (.) I don't know I did not
896 quite understand she was just like
897 I couldn't understand the people
898 they were (too) complicated
899 Alan: hm m (...) so would say that
900 infanti as you said (.) the german
901 teacher as you
902 said was there anybody else who
903 talked about the difficulty of
904 being an interpreter
905 Rosa: er no nobody else (..) we don't
906 have any other interpreters (xx) I
907 think

908 Alan: (4.0) well I'm just curious still to
 909 understand what's made you
 910 change your mind I mean 2
 911 professors have talked about the
 912 difficulty of being a top
 913 interpreter (...) you seem to be a
 914 bit worried about (.) the fact that
 915 there are bilinguals in the
 916 classroom (...) but to change
 917 quite a lot from what you said at
 918 the beginning when I interviewed
 919 you were thinking of the united
 920 nations and so on coming down
 921 so so much from your dream I
 922 think it sounded like a dream I
 923 don't know if it's a dream or not
 924 it sounds strange that you (.) you
 925 did it based on 2 teachers and a
 926 few students
 927 Rosa: hm (...) oh yeah maybe also like
 928 because I'm studying a lot but
 929 the result is not bad but it's not as
 930 I expecting so: (.) erm I know
 931 that- I got to know that it would
 932 be really really difficult also to
 933 get that high level so (...) I don't
 934 know maybe I'll (surpass) that?
 935 Alan: hm what do you mean you got to
 936 know it would be very difficult at
 937 a very high level what do you
 938 mean by? How did you judge
 939 yourself?
 940 Rosa: erm for example at first before
 941 coming to this university I was

942 trying to like learn same time 3 4
 943 languages but I wasn't studying it
 944 as I'm studying now like every
 945 subject you have to know
 946 everything like doing mediations
 947 and (.) like studying it like this
 948 goo:d I was like just studying to
 949 be able to talk to people normal
 950 saying hello normal things and
 951 then erm here (.) erm like more
 952 than 3 languages so: difficult cos
 953 (.) it's just you don't have time (.)
 954 I'm always having problem with
 955 time ((small laugh)) (..) it takes a
 956 lot of time like to know a
 957 language like to be able to do a
 958 mediation cos you have to know
 959 like all the wor:ds and (.) so (..) I
 960 got to know that (xx) will need a
 961 lot of time a lot of work a lot of
 962 time (.)
 963 Alan: right so in the individual
 964 mediation situations (.) to learn
 965 the (..) vocabulary (.) is it mainly
 966 vocabulary we're talking about or:
 967 grammar or
 968 Rosa: er yeah everything but yeah also
 969 vocabulary
 970 Alan: because you think it's SO much
 971 work (..) that to become a good
 972 interpreter becomes more
 973 difficult
 974 Rosa: maybe a bit

975 Alan: hm (4.0) and are you quite happy
 976 with this change of perspective?
 977 Rosa: yeah I am (...)
 978 Alan: and what are your aspirations
 979 then now for the future?
 980 Rosa: I have no I idea ((laughs))
 981 because I I don't know I'm just
 982 studying until I graduate and then
 983 maybe I have to think about it
 984 more but (..) I know I like
 985 language I know I like
 986 interpreting (.) translation no (.)
 987 Alan: hm (4.0)
 988 Rosa: that's it
 989 Alan: hm (...) so you're quite happy to
 990 carry on like this do you feel (.) a
 991 little less enthusiastic at this point?
 992 Rosa: m: a bit maybe (.) but not that
 993 much
 994 Alan: hm (4.0) so moving from
 995 aspirations to high (.) interpreting
 996 levels of the united nations to
 997 more sort of limited potential for
 998 the future (.) you- your quite
 999 happy with that? do you not feel
 1000 any slight change in (.) your
 1001 emotions or feelings about the
 1002 future or is it just
 1003 Rosa: I don't know ((laughs)) (..) I
 1004 really don't know but I think I'm
 1005 becoming more realistic
 1006 Alan: realistic? Hmm (...) right and
 1007 you said a lot of people in your

1008 class (.) people are becoming
 1009 more realistic as well
 1010 Rosa: yeah ((small laugh))
 1011 Alan: yeah (2.0) is there a sense that
 1012 students agree that some students
 1013 will be (..) top and others won't
 1014 be is that happened in the last
 1015 year? (.) since the beginning it
 1016 wasn't certain and now it seems
 1017 that (.) some students are destined
 1018 for something and some students
 1019 aren't am I understanding
 1020 correctly?
 1021 Rosa: erm (2.0) a bit yeah a bit yeah
 1022 ((laughs))
 1023 Alan: hm? (2.0)
 1024 Rosa: not destined but (..) I think yeah
 1025 some students have more
 1026 possibility (...)
 1027 Alan: because?
 1028 Rosa: because (.) they have talent
 1029 ((small laugh)) (..) lots of talent
 1030 Alan: talent is?
 1031 Rosa: ((laughs)) I don't know talent is
 1032 talent I mean they're just good
 1033 like (.) also like maybe they lo:ve
 1034 lear:ning: I mean I like it but not
 1035 that passionate about it (..) you
 1036 can see the difference like
 1037 between me and some students
 1038 that are really passionate about
 1039 lang- learning language like
 1040 every language (4.0)

1041 Alan: so you're not you're not as
 1042 passionate?
 1043 Rosa: hm: no (.) I like it but not as
 1044 passionate as some people no:
 1045 (2.0)
 1046 Alan: did you think the same at the
 1047 beginning when you started?
 1048 Rosa: yea:h I knew from the
 1049 beginning that (.) I still haven't
 1050 found my way I mean I'm alwa-
 1051 always still thinking also about
 1052 other like when I finish my
 1053 studies here maybe I would start
 1054 another study I don't know I'm
 1055 still (.) kinda (xx) undecided
 1056 Alan: wh- what other study?
 1057 Rosa: hm (.) I don't know I always like
 1058 math (..) so: first I wanted to
 1059 become an architect so: (.) then I
 1060 decided language because I
 1061 always liked math and languages
 1062 so I took language but on the
 1063 other hand (makes me think
 1064 something with) math (.) like
 1065 economics also they can go kinda
 1066 good together (.) something like
 1067 business woman (..)
 1068 Alan: hm (...) so you're thinking of a
 1069 totally different career (.)
 1070 potentially?
 1071 Rosa: m: maybe I don't know (...) it's
 1072 just (..) so complicated ((laughs))
 1073 there many stuff and I still
 1074 haven't found my way

1075 Alan: hm (.) cos you were talking about
 1076 finding your way=
 1077 Rosa: =yeah
 1078 Alan: when you first came to italy and
 1079 you decided to come to SSLMIT
 1080 after the first year
 1081 Rosa: yeah (2.0)
 1082 Alan: but
 1083 Rosa: still not ((laughs))
 1084 Alan: still not
 1085 Rosa: I still (xx)
 1086 Alan: when you started here did you
 1087 think that (.) you'd discovered
 1088 your way or: (.) were you still
 1089 thinking about it?
 1090 Rosa: erm (.) I'm becoming more and
 1091 more positive about interpreting
 1092 (.) at first also (.) at first I was
 1093 yeah maybe more positive now
 1094 I'm (.) kinda like (in the way)
 1095 but still more positive (3.0)
 1096 Alan: still comes the question comes
 1097 back (.) why this change
 1098 Rosa: ((laughs))
 1099 Alan: you started and you were more
 1100 positive and now (.) you're not
 1101 (4.0) no? you're not going to tell
 1102 me why ((starts laughing))
 1103 Rosa: ((laughs))
 1104 Alan: this happened you're not sure
 1105 perhaps
 1106 Rosa: yeah I think I told you the reason
 1107 that (.) seeing other students (...) I
 1108 don't know like if I would be

1109 going if I go to find a job in erm I
 1110 don't know if they say there's
 1111 once er 2 places for an in-
 1112 interpreting job a:nd I go for an
 1113 interview and also a mother
 1114 tongue Italian goes for an
 1115 interview I think like for sure
 1116 they would take them
 1117 Alan: hm
 1118 Rosa: why would they take me I'm not
 1119 I don't have the proper accent so:
 1120 (3.0)
 1121 Alan: but if they were looking for
 1122 interpreters into Persian and
 1123 Arabic?
 1124 Rosa: erm ah in arabic yeah I could
 1125 have some chance but in persian
 1126 (.) I don't think they would look
 1127 for Persian ((laughs)) (3.0)
 1128 politics maybe=
 1129 Alan: = you seem to assume that it's
 1130 always towards the language (.)
 1131 of the country you're studying
 1132 in=
 1133 Rosa: =yeah I think one way it has to be
 1134 (..) first I thought no there could
 1135 be both ways for example like
 1136 italian and english but now I
 1137 think like from one way there has
 1138 to be the mother tongue (3.0)
 1139 Alan: and you still feel that your Italian
 1140 is not good enough then?
 1141 Rosa: as a mother tongue? I don't think
 1142 it could ever be maybe years but

1143 Alan: what about professor rutland?
 1144 you said [everybody
 1145 Rosa: [the others
 1146 said ((laughs)) I don't know I
 1147 cannot (xx) but I think also he
 1148 has I think he has been here for
 1149 more than 20 years so (..) after 20
 1150 years
 1151 Alan: (..) but also professor Bennett
 1152 has been here for 20 years as
 1153 well and they did comment on
 1154 the difference in the Italian (.)
 1155 you seemed to be quite
 1156 enthusiastic about the fact that
 1157 [they
 1158 Rosa: [yeah
 1159 They did say there are some
 1160 people that they consider them
 1161 as Italian mother tongue also (..)
 1162 so (.) I was happy about hearing
 1163 that (3.0)
 1164 Alan: but you don't think you can
 1165 become (..) so good?
 1166 Rosa: yeah I think I would but (.) I
 1167 don't know as an interpreter I
 1168 don't know it would take a lot
 1169 of years (..)
 1170 Alan: so you're thinking of a different
 1171 career now perhaps?
 1172 Rosa: m: (.) no I still like interpreting
 1173 Alan: but you were talking about
 1174 Rosa: but also that (.) I don't know I
 1175 mean I'm gonna just continue my
 1176 studies and think about

1177 everything through I still have 2
 1178 more years so
 1179 Alan: you said when you were back in
 1180 iran engineering was quite a
 1181 strong subject
 1182 Rosa: yeah
 1183 Alan: yeah
 1184 Rosa: I came here like with I came here
 1185 to study engineering and I chose
 1186 language
 1187 Alan: why?
 1188 Rosa: erm:: (...) to be honest the
 1189 entrance exam was too hard
 1190 ((laughs))
 1191 Alan: ah (2.0) but if it wasn't too hard
 1192 you (..) you would (..) prefer
 1193 Alan: erm: (...) I don't know maybe
 1194 maybe not cos also that when I
 1195 talk I still have always this
 1196 fascination about this jobs always
 1197 ask my friends who have chosen
 1198 it and sometimes I hear negative
 1199 things sometimes positive things
 1200 but (..) one of the other reason is
 1201 in the work for finding jobs they
 1202 always say like for example
 1203 architecture it's (..) there's too
 1204 much architecture so: it's a bit
 1205 hard to find jobs (..) like maybe
 1206 something to do: with languages
 1207 you would be able to find a job
 1208 easier but (2.0)

1209 Alan: what was more important then
 1210 was it (.) getting a jo:b or: doing
 1211 what you like? I mean erm
 1212 Rosa: erm well
 1213 Alan: if you had to decide between the
 1214 2 which one would you decide on?
 1215 Rosa: erm (..) (a) job
 1216 Alan: hm (.) and job meaning what for
 1217 you?
 1218 Rosa: (4.0) independence? ((laughs))
 1219 Alan: (4.0) independence in what sense?
 1220 Rosa: well like having a job like (.)
 1221 standing on my own (.) having I
 1222 don't know
 1223 Alan: hm
 1224 Rosa: becoming independence
 1225 completely
 1226 Alan: because at the moment are [you
 1227 not independent
 1228 Rosa: [yeah yeah
 1229 I am (4.0) I want to keep on go-
 1230 being independent so:
 1231 Alan: hm and what would the
 1232 alternative be?
 1233 Rosa: (.) hm: (...) ((laughs)) I don't
 1234 know like er (...)
 1235 getting money from the parents
 1236 the not being able to find a job
 1237 not working (2.0)
 1238 Alan: hm support from your parents
 1239 Rosa: yeah
 1240 Alan: hm (..) and you don't want that
 1241 Rosa: ((small laugh)) no

1242 Alan: are they still happy with you
 1243 being here [and still studying
 1244 Rosa: [yea:h
 1245 they're really happy about it (4.0)
 1246 Alan: have they decided to come and
 1247 see you?=
 1248 Rosa: =erm actually my mom is trying
 1249 to get a visa to come on
 1250 September and my sister's gonna
 1251 come and see me on (.) july
 1252 Alan: hm (..)
 1253 Rosa: then on (.) july we're going to go
 1254 together to germany (.) my mom
 1255 is coming to germany ((laughs))
 1256 Alan: right (..) why germany?
 1257 Rosa: ah I have parents there my: aunts
 1258 and my grandmother live there so:
 1259 Alan: (..) right and your father he's not
 1260 coming?
 1261 Rosa: erm no (.) he has another life
 1262 ((laughs))
 1263 Alan: right (5.0) so (.) independence is
 1264 the main thing
 1265 Rosa: yeah=
 1266 Alan: =if I understand correct so (.) if if
 1267 it wasn't interpreting it would be
 1268 something else?
 1269 Rosa: (...) m: (..) yeah maybe
 1270 (engineering) but I don't know I
 1271 like them both I can't say which
 1272 one more (.)
 1273 Alan: they're quite different though
 1274 aren't they? Engineering and
 1275 interpreting

1276 Rosa: yeah they are ((laughs)) (.) I was
 1277 always confused about these 2
 1278 subjects I always liked (.)
 1279 England- math and language so:
 1280 (.) but I think now I'm becoming
 1281 more happy about my choice
 1282 becoming interpreting interpreter
 1283 cos I mean I like to travel a lot
 1284 know different people so (.) that's
 1285 a job

1286 Alan: hm

1287 Rosa: interpreter

1288 Alan: hm (..) but as you said if you
 1289 were not an interpreter you would
 1290 think about studying something
 1291 else?

1292 Rosa: yeah

1293 Alan: do you think it might be difficult
 1294 to become an interpreter in a
 1295 company?

1296 Rosa: (.) m: like (..) what company?

1297 Alan: well you said I don't want to be
 1298 necessarily a united nations
 1299 interpreter perhaps a company or
 1300 a business

1301 Rosa: it would be difficult yah I mean (.)
 1302 interpreting is a bit stressful as
 1303 everybody says it is but less
 1304 stressful than the other like less
 1305 stressful than UN

1306 Alan: hm (...) but stressful and the
 1307 ability to do the job to find the
 1308 job are 2 different things (.) [it
 1309 would be difficult to find a job?

1310 Rosa: [(xxx)
1311 Erm yah I think it would be really
1312 difficult or still even that but
1313 Alan: hm m
1314 Rosa: it would be possible let's say
1315 Alan: why would it be difficult to be an
1316 interpreter for a company?
1317 Rosa: ah there are too many people who
1318 are studying the languages so (2.0)
1319 Alan: [here in the school
1320 Rosa: [(xx)
1321 Here in thi- in the world
1322 ((laughs))
1323 Alan: ah (..) and don't you think you
1324 have some advantage over them?
1325 Rosa: (...) I don't think so ((laughs))=
1326 Alan: =no?
1327 Rosa: I don't even have Italian as my
1328 mother language so:
1329 Alan: right (...) but but what's the
1330 purpose of studying here at the
1331 school? If there's no advantage in
1332 it for you personally
1333 Rosa: cos I like it ((laughs)) I don't
1334 know cos I like interpreting and (.)
1335 mediating (.) so
1336 Alan: but doesn't it make you feel more
1337 special than somebody outside
1338 the school? (.) who speaks
1339 languages
1340 Rosa: hm (...) I don't think so at all
1341 ((small laugh))
1342 Alan: so what's the purpose then?

1343 Rosa: ((small laugh)) maybe studying
 1344 here I don't know they teach the
 1345 best ways to (relate) teachers are
 1346 really good so you are able to
 1347 learn a lot of things so: after three
 1348 years of (.) learning here (.) yah I
 1349 think I would be better than
 1350 somebody who has never studied
 1351 here yeah of course that yeah
 1352 Alan: (4.0) but?
 1353 Rosa: no (no but) ((laughs))
 1354 Alan: so you would learn something
 1355 more than perhaps
 1356 Rosa: yeah yeah
 1357 Alan: even if the people were native
 1358 speakers
 1359 Rosa: yeah because also for example
 1360 they teach us how to act and how
 1361 to behave while interpreting and
 1362 they teach us how to act in
 1363 different occasions in for example
 1364 we never had interpreted so ew
 1365 had like in- erm mediation
 1366 courses (.) somebody who has
 1367 like never had these classes could
 1368 not understand like how to do it
 1369 erm mediation how to mediate so
 1370 they tell us everything about how
 1371 to become a good mediator like
 1372 what's what to say what not to
 1373 say how to (..) calm down people
 1374 so (.)
 1375 Alan: so there are skills as well
 1376 Rosa: yeah yeah

1377 Alan: (..) hm so it's positive for that?
1378 Rosa: yeah (.)
1379 Alan: so it's not just language it's also
1380 (.) technique isn't it?
1381 Rosa: yeah yeah it is
1382 Alan: hm (...)
1383 ((both laugh)) ok:: thank you very
1384 much

Silvia 2: Second interview

- 1 Alan: so silvia (...) how's this last term been
2 for you? How would you describe it?
- 3 Silvia: em: last month
- 4 Alan: the last term because we met at the it
5 was the end of the last of the first term
- 6 Silvia: hm m
- 7 Alan: so how has it been going so far?
- 8 Silvia: well erm it's been busier ((small laugh))
9 than the first one I had several rehearsals
10 for japanese and english theatres and
11 also the subjects were a little bit heavier
- 12 Alan: hmm
- 13 Silvia: I can say (.) e:m well I like it more than
14 the first one anyway
- 15 Alan: yeah
- 16 Silvia: because the first one especially in
17 English was about culture and the
18 second one is about mediation so I like
19 that part more than the first one a::nd in
20 Chinese we start to talk in regular
21 sentences ((laughs)) and japan we started
22 Japanese it's one of my favourite
23 languages so: I find it more interested
24 than the first one
- 25 Alan: hmm
- 26 Silvia: and the friendships were (.) I don't know
27 I started to get to know people better
28 than the first term so:: we enjoyed the
29 second term together a:nd I: have lots of
30 friends in SSLMIT so (.) I like the way it
31 went

32 Alan: hmm

33 Silvia: in this past months

34 Alan: right is it more difficult this year did I

35 understand correctly?

36 Silvia: more difficult this term?

37 Alan: hmm

38 Silvia: yeah because it er was busier I mean er:

39 we started a new language for me it's

40 Japanese for others it's Portuguese or

41 Chinese or whatever a:nd we have the

42 exams I think the exams of this term are

43 heavier or more difficult anyway (.) ((in

44 take of breath)) but they are more

45 interesting too so: (.) er you have to

46 study a lot

47 Alan: hm m

48 Silvia: and to improve your English my Chinese

49 and my Japanese especially e::m but

50 even the the friends erm my friends er I

51 know them better than before so i: I

52 don't know I am feeling more (..) I don't

53 know how to say it (..) feeling better

54 anyway

55 Alan: hmm

56 Silvia: em

57 Alan: what's it like since you've started

58 studying Japanese now? Is it (.) have

59 things become more difficult for you

60 Silvia: em: a little bit more difficult but more

61 interesting

62 Alan: hmm

63 Silvia: a lot more interesting because (.) I like

64 Japanese very much I love that language

65 it's very difficult ((small laugh)) bu:t

66 since it's one of my favourite ones I
 67 don't care as long as I can learn it so (.)
 68 it's ok
 69 Alan: hmm one of your more difficult ones (.)
 70 because it's very difficult more different
 71 from the other languages you learnt?
 72 Silvia: yes it's not that different from Chinese (.)
 73 bu:t er: it's I think Chinese is more
 74 difficult than Japanese
 75 Alan: yeah
 76 Silvia: ah bu:t since I: watched a lot of (animes)
 77 in Japanese in original language er I like
 78 to understand sometimes some words or
 79 expressions i: hope some day I will
 80 know this language better than I do now
 81 so
 82 Alan: hmm (.) how do you find it in the
 83 classroom is it the same is it very
 84 different from the other languages you
 85 are learning?
 86 Silvia: ah: well er: you mean the class mates?
 87 Alan: yeah the atmosphere the way you have
 88 to learn
 89 Silvia: er: the atmosphere is good (.) in
 90 Japanese lessons it's very good the
 91 professor is great and the class- I know
 92 most of the class mates so I'm ok we're
 93 all right in the Japanese lesson (.)
 94 Chinese ah I don't like er: erm: I don't
 95 like Chinese like I like erm Japanese (.)
 96 the same level but (.) I guess it's ok
 97 some of the my classroom mates in the
 98 Chinese lessons are my friends so: we're
 99 not much we're not many we are 15 or

100 20 a:nd in English we're a lot ((laughs))
 101 lots of classes a:nd I know most of them
 102 (.) erm I like English it's why I came
 103 here (.) first of all ((laughs)) because I
 104 love English language so: (.) it's
 105 becoming more difficult more and more
 106 difficult (.) because they ask you ahh
 107 high level in the spoken and written
 108 language bu- but I guess it's ok it's why
 109 I came here after all ((laughs))
 110 Alan: when you say they ask you for a high
 111 level does that mean you experience it in
 112 the classroom as a high level or they ask
 113 you in what way?
 114 Silvia: er both (.) I mean er even the professor
 115 the professor (.) ok it's normal (.) but
 116 also my classmates there's a high level
 117 between among my classmates there are
 118 people who are very keen in English
 119 they study a lot or they just talented I
 120 think a:nd I think I am one of the worst
 121 in the school for English er so I have to
 122 improve a lot in this year that's is why I
 123 would like love to go to Exeter in
 124 erazmus but since er it wasn't the case
 125 ((laughs)) I am going to brest in france (.)
 126 hoping to to learn French be- better than
 127 I do now so when I will go out of this
 128 school I will know French at least more
 129 than the others I don't know because
 130 Chinese and Japanese are too difficult to
 131 learn them good erm I don't think I
 132 will know them after three years I have
 133 to go to china to japan so: (.) it's

134 difficult a:nd I don't know in English it
 135 should have been better if I went to
 136 Exeter but since I can't it's ok I'm gonna
 137 improve in another way ((laughs))
 138 Alan: why can't you go to Exeter?
 139 Silvia: because I was er: in the (.) list the
 140 gradutoria
 141 Alan: yeah
 142 Silvia: (.) er but I wasn't vincitore ((Italian for
 143 winner)) (.) then I accepted brest a:nd
 144 then I: found out that I wa:s I was taken
 145 I don't know I was vincitore for Exeter
 146 be- because somebody er ha rinunciato
 147 ((Italian for renounced))
 148 Alan: yeah they they renounced their place
 149 Silvia: renounced can can you say renounced
 150 Alan: ye:ah they gave up gave up their place
 151 Silvia: gave up their place and so I was oh my:
 152 ok let's go to brest then ((laughs)) er
 153 since I think that everything that
 154 happens to me it's the sign of the destiny
 155 (.) let's go ((laughs)) (xx)
 156 Alan: destiny
 157 Silvia: yeah ((laughs))
 158 Alan: you still so you believe in destiny
 159 Silvia: yeah ((laughs)) (.) guess so ((laughs))
 160 Alan: because you said I remember in the first
 161 interview you were talking about (..)
 162 having to you know work
 163 Silvia: hm m
 164 Alan: to become a good interpreter
 165 Silvia: yeah but there's also (.) well I think
 166 there are things you can't control
 167 Alan: [yeah

168 Silvia: [so:
 169 I guess that's destiny ((laughs))
 170 Alan: yeah such as? what would you say you
 171 can't control?
 172 S; I mean not everything that happens to us
 173 it's up to us so ((laughs)) I don't know
 174 like what I just said a while ago I don't
 175 know 10 minutes ago er ((exhales)) I
 176 don't know err a lot of things
 177 Alan: hmm
 178 Silvia: now I can't remember but a lot of things
 179 Alan: yeah
 180 Silvia: I mean why did you do what you did?
 181 When you did it ((laughs))
 182 Alan: yeah
 183 Silvia: you don't know you just chose it you
 184 just chose that path and whether y- you
 185 controlled it you chose it or maybe not
 186 so
 187 Alan: since our last interview our one-to-one
 188 interview do you think you've changed
 189 in some way since then?
 190 Silvia: yeah
 191 Alan: how would you describe that? (..)
 192 change
 193 Silvia: we'll boh first of all I started to: go to go
 194 to japan theatre so I started to opt (.) er
 195 to: to be on stage er speaking in
 196 Japanese and I never (.) done this before
 197 then with my friends I thing I have
 198 changed some er behaviour I think even
 199 towards the: (.) school exams and classes
 200 (.) I think my behaviour changed a little
 201 bit (.)

202 Alan: could you describe a little bit how it
 203 changed
 204 Silvia: oh we:ll (.) I started to be more erm (.)
 205 practical (.) for ad- administrative things
 206 I don't know
 207 Alan: hm m
 208 Silvia: technical things I don't know er because
 209 you're on your own when you're here
 210 you don't have your parents behind you
 211 you have to go through a lot of things a
 212 lot of stuff
 213 Alan: yeah
 214 Silvia: a:nd the::n i:: ((exhales)) I don't know
 215 with friends I think that with every
 216 person you meet changes you in some
 217 sort of way so: I changed my behaviour
 218 according to each person
 219 Alan: hm m
 220 Silvia: er (.) I don't know erm
 221 Alan: can you think of some specific episodes
 222 that might you know might (.) you know
 223 explain this change
 224 Silvia: well once a friend shouted at me e:rm in
 225 the past we used to answer back (..) er
 226 but that time I didn't (.) I realised
 227 ((possibly a false friend , 'realizare' to
 228 do)) something else so:
 229 Alan: shouted at you in what sense?
 230 Silvia: because I was being I guess I was being
 231 a little bit ((laughs)) a: ((laughs)) drag
 232 ((laughs)) I don't know
 233 Alan: hm m
 234 Silvia: I was stressing others I think a:nd
 235 someone told me that

236 Alan: is this is the classroom or in general?
 237 Silvia: yeah this one one of my classmates but it
 238 didn't happen in the class anyway
 239 Alan: what happened in that moment that (.)
 240 you think they [got stressed with you
 241 Silvia: [er well
 242 I realised that er (..) sometimes I had to I
 243 don't know control myself and not let
 244 the others feel my pain I think my stress
 245 erm keep it for myself when it's (..)
 246 exaggerated I don't know when I I
 247 exaggerate (.) erm (.) and that sometimes
 248 you just can't answer back you just have
 249 to keep it for yourself just to think about
 250 it and say ok maybe he's right
 251 Alan: you said pain stress erm (.) something
 252 quite specific it sounds like you know
 253 Silvia: [yeah
 254 Alan: [express your pain
 255 your stress what does that mean
 256 Silvia: er it mean that it was er the end of the
 257 classes it was a month ago not the end
 258 but I mean the great work that you have
 259 to do it's on your back
 260 Alan: hmm
 261 Silvia: you feel it a:nd I always er I also work
 262 working in forli I have classes to go to I
 263 have exams to pass er: rehearsals to do (.)
 264 so:: I was busy and I felt the stress
 265 Alan: yeah
 266 Silvia: maybe not knowing it i: erm throw it on
 267 my friends shoulders you know and they
 268 let me notice ((laughs))
 269 Alan: hm m

270 Silvia: so now I: i try to take it more you know
 271 (.) relaxed
 272 Alan: hm m can you think how that episode
 273 occurred where that stress was obvious
 274 to you (.) can you tell me what happened
 275 in that specific moment that episode
 276 Silvia: ah well I went down a:nd the all the
 277 where we were English class I was I
 278 don't know how can you say inquieta
 279 ((laughs))
 280 Alan: eh inquieta I think perhaps I was agitated
 281 [not very relaxed
 282 Silvia: [yeah
 283 Exactly I was agitated all the time during
 284 that one and half hour (.) so: my friend
 285 came down stairs to have (a film) I
 286 reached them
 287 Alan: to watch a film
 288 Silvia: (..)
 289 Alan: you said to have a film
 290 Silvia: an ice-cream sorry ((laughs))
 291 Alan: oh sorry it's me (xx)
 292 Silvia: an ice-cream a:nd I reached them a:nd I
 293 was complaining about something I
 294 can't remember what and there was a
 295 point my one of one of my friends (.)
 296 ((exhales)) talk start starts to shout at me
 297 yeah because I wa:s (..) stressed and I
 298 was stressing them too (.) the other
 299 friends were just watching they weren't
 300 they weren't they actually weren't didn't
 301 agree with the- (.) they said they told me
 302 ok maybe: over reacted er I wouldn't

303 have done it (.) and I was saying no it's
 304 ok ((exhales)) it was right (.)
 305 Alan: what did you do? I don't understand
 306 what you did
 307 Silvia: i:: I didn't react I suddenly I was like (.)
 308 ok (.) I; er turned my back because I
 309 forgot something in the classroom and I
 310 went upstairs and when I went
 311 downstairs they were gone because they
 312 we're trying to take (nothing) I didn't
 313 react
 314 R; why did they shout at you?
 315 Silvia: because I stressed them too
 316 R; how did you stress then?
 317 Silvia: cos I was always complaining (.) or they
 318 are friends there is a friend of mine who
 319 do not like when people act childish and
 320 I was laughing at something very
 321 childish during the class because I was
 322 so stred- I had stressed I had to er let it
 323 go in some other ways like ((laughs))
 324 laughing for something very stupid a:nd
 325 so was always saying come on you you
 326 do you have ten are you ten years old?
 327 Or something like that it was like (xxx) I
 328 wanted to laugh it's ok and the:n more
 329 and more of these episodes in the same
 330 class and when I went down stairs ah
 331 well he he: couldn't erm bear the the
 332 weight so: he told me (.) a:nd
 333 Alan: what were you laughing at?
 334 Silvia: ((laughs))
 335 Alan: that he considered childish

336 Silvia: well stupid things ((laughs)) very stupid
 337 things I can't remember now what they
 338 were just very stupid I mean like (puns)
 339 I think
 340 Alan: sorry
 341 Silvia: puns
 342 Alan: ah ha
 343 Silvia: games in languages when it's in Italian
 344 and English just some kind of game with
 345 words I don't know
 346 Alan: right (.) so were they speaking in
 347 English and you were punning on the
 348 english words or
 349 Silvia: in Italian yes (.) something like that
 350 ((laughs))
 351 Alan: ah ha
 352 Silvia: but I think it was stress too ((laughs)) so
 353 my this is just an episode there are lots
 354 erm ((exhales)) I can't remember them
 355 but there are a lot
 356 Alan: are you more stressed this term do you
 357 think?
 358 Silvia: (.) now no I'm not that stressed because
 359 I took two day for to relax (.) so: I didn't
 360 do (..) anything in particular just rest
 361 myself because I was really (.) stressed
 362 because of all those things I had to do
 363 and I have to do so: there was even erm
 364 a friend of mine who came all the way
 365 here from france to visit me and to to
 366 watch my theatre (.) performance so she
 367 was here for 2 weeks so I was I was (..)
 368 was doing these rehearsals so I was
 369 studying I was I had to do a lot of things

370 for my house for my flatmates friends
 371 and then I had to stay with her too
 372 because she came here for me too so: I
 373 was kinda stressed now I'm kinda
 374 relaxed I have to study because the
 375 whole section is about to start but I'm ok
 376 (.) I'm more relaxed anyway
 377 Alan: yeah so from the very beginning of your
 378 university degree to now you've gone
 379 through a change?
 380 Silvia: yeah I I wouldn't say a big change but I
 381 think that you change a lot during the (.)
 382 the months the weeks I don't know (.) as
 383 the we- as the weeks go on on and on
 384 you change a little bit
 385 Alan: sure
 386 Silvia: you never stay yourself
 387 Alan: hm m
 388 Silvia: for too long
 389 Alan: cos you talked about going through a
 390 sort of trial by fire
 391 Silvia: hm m
 392 Alan: in our first one-to-one interview you said
 393 it's like throwing yourself into the fire
 394 Silvia: yeah ((laughs))
 395 Alan: [and
 396 Silvia: [do you
 397 remember that ((laughs))
 398 Alan: yes you said it was a very positive thing
 399 and that out of this came (.) if I
 400 remember correctly out of this came
 401 positive things
 402 Silvia: yeah
 403 Alan: but you weren't afraid of the fire

404 Silvia: no: I'm not afraid even here now I'm not
 405 afraid of this fire even in the class when
 406 I see that other people are better than me
 407 because they are ((laughs)) err I'm not
 408 afraid I just think ok I shall improve a:nd
 409 I can do it I have I think I have the (...)
 410 the instruments I don't know em (.) a
 411 way to do it anyway mm (.) maybe I
 412 should perhaps put myself more in it
 413 because ((laughs)) I er let the school is
 414 the last thing on my list sometimes and I
 415 shouldn't be doing it so: I just have to
 416 think about my: (.) er ((exhales)) not my
 417 needings my: (.) how do you say (.) I
 418 can't even remember in Italian the word
 419 er priorities (.) and that's it er there are
 420 people there are some of my friends
 421 better than me and I like to to go along
 422 with them to to go out with them mm
 423 because they are positive friendship they
 424 can bring something to me and
 425 sometimes you need other people to
 426 bring something to you because you
 427 can't do it on your own that's ok
 428 Alan: hm m (...) what do they bring to you?
 429 Silvia: we'll some people brought a little bit of
 430 erm knowledge about erm my behaviour
 431 how I I look outside some others a sch- a
 432 schools things I don't know like English
 433 or Chinese or Japanese they help me
 434 with (.) knowing more about these
 435 languages or knowledge about I don't
 436 know the world outside abroad there

437 are a lot of people who went to Australia
 438 America er they travelled a lot and they
 439 had all those fantastic experiences so I
 440 try to erm to take some of these some of
 441 that information and try to use it to on (.)
 442 in the future
 443 Alan: hm m (..) you said some friends took
 444 you out to think about yourself?
 445 Silvia: yeah also
 446 Alan: in relation to?
 447 Silvia: I mean on the outside because as you
 448 know ((small laugh)) we think of
 449 ourselves from the inside and just the
 450 other people can make you realise what
 451 you're doing what you are from the
 452 outside
 453 Alan: hm
 454 Silvia: so: sometimes er they told me something
 455 I (.) couldn't realise because I don't
 456 know myself from the outside
 457 Alan: hm m for example (.)
 458 Silvia: erm I don't know maybe when I react to
 459 how I relate to some sort of situations (.)
 460 er for example when I'm childish or
 461 when I'm strong even in the positive
 462 way not always negative ((laughs)) I
 463 mean they tell me oh you're fantastic
 464 you're so strong and I I know I'm not
 465 but they told they tell me and I start to
 466 think maybe i: I don't know i: lack this
 467 strength er go to them and I don't say
 468 transfer? Transmittere
 469 Alan: yeah to transfer [it to
 470 Silvia: [transfer

471 Alan: yeah what sort of strengths are they
 472 talking about
 473 Silvia: more because ((laughs)) I think I am
 474 erm (.) I don't know I'm a (fire)
 475 character I am I mean there are some
 476 characters that there are (.) erm (.) cold
 477 Alan: hm m
 478 Silvia: I think I am the opposite ((laughs)) [(x)
 479 Alan: [firey
 480 Silvia: yeah firey I'm explosive so they tell me
 481 oh you're so full of energy all the time
 482 and when th- they see that I'm not rarely
 483 rare occasions because i: try not to erm
 484 make this (.) feeling er go out in the
 485 world i: i: try to keep it for myself when
 486 I'm not full of energy I'm not myself but
 487 in that rare occasions erm (.) they tell me
 488 you're not as you're used to I know you
 489 don't usually are this way what
 490 happened to you? so: it's maybe: I don't
 491 know I think I'm more open now than I
 492 was before even in the: theatre er:
 493 meeting we had on during the second
 494 term I think erm: there was this erm
 495 actor who came here because one from
 496 the senza limiti ((theatre group)) called
 497 him to make us express ourselves in
 498 another languages (.) and learn how to
 499 express ourselves in other languages er
 500 he made us do some games with
 501 expressions games I realised I was err (..)
 502 shy ((laughs)) I didn't know that but I
 503 was shy I realised that in that moment so:

504 (..) this is how f- fate changed for me (..)
 505 so: I don't know ((laughs))
 506 Alan: shy in that language or shy in your own
 507 language?
 508 Silvia: no in general I'm: the:y say ok you're
 509 not shy (.) bu:t I I thought I wasn't shy
 510 and then I realised I was a:nd this actor
 511 told me (.) well for me it was clear (.)
 512 you are shy why did someone told tell
 513 you that you're not? It was like no: they
 514 told me no you're full of energy you're
 515 always the first one to drag us into
 516 something I don't know maybe go to the
 517 (vecchio stazione) or other things (.)
 518 theatre and so that's it ((laughs))
 519 Alan: did they effect the way that you looked
 520 at yourself
 521 Silvia: (..) yeah
 522 Alan: how?
 523 Silvia: (..) well when someone er (.) err show
 524 you shows you that you're not what you
 525 thought you were ((exhales)) it strikes
 526 you y- (.) you're grown up 20 years
 527 thinking about yourself in some ways
 528 and then you find yourself thinking other
 529 things about yourself (.) you're not what
 530 you thought you were so (.) it's kind of a
 531 trauma ((laughs)) but not the kind of
 532 trauma that er (.) keeps you cold or away
 533 from the world it just a: sort of barrier
 534 you have to over pass you know er to
 535 pass through anyway a:nd
 536 Alan: so you accepted their view

537 Silvia: yeah a:nd i: realised i: was (..) how they
 538 tell they told me I was (.) it's ok I just
 539 have to go through this barrier I know to
 540 pass through a:nd (.) it's another (.)
 541 challenge ((laughs))
 542 Alan: right this barrier (.) to feel timid or shy?
 543 Silvia: yeah
 544 Alan: but is that any has that got any
 545 relationship to being a future interpreter
 546 or (.) your dream?
 547 Silvia: oh well I don't know because it was so
 548 sudden I don't know if (.) it has anything
 549 to being a future interpreter (.) I just
 550 have to (.) overcome it in some way a:nd
 551 maybe will be good for me even as an
 552 interpreter to: (.) er ((exhales)) (.) to
 553 crash this barrier I don't know
 554 Alan: hm cos you said in your first interview
 555 that you were very (.) it was your dream
 556 to be an interpreter
 557 Silvia: yeah erm I mean it's my dream always
 558 be but I'm changing my: (.) point of
 559 view
 560 Alan: why?
 561 Silvia: (.) I don't know i: ((in take of breath))
 562 I've seen so many things this year i: I'm
 563 not sure I will be or want to be an
 564 interpreter (3.0) there are a lot of things
 565 to do so: I will see I'm not sure about
 566 being an interpreter in the future
 567 anymore (..) I will see as the opportunity
 568 come (.) I wish to choose something I
 569 don't know (..)

570 Alan: hm what has happened to make you
 571 think about this differently you think
 572 Silvia: oh because first there are a lot a lot of
 573 jobs you can do (.) ahh (.) jobs that you
 574 can't even imagine exists so: there's this
 575 friend of mine who came from france to
 576 to see my to watch my theatre
 577 performances er she's going to australia
 578 (.) ah she told me well i: will find a job
 579 but there are so many jobs we (.) can't
 580 imagine (.) that maybe I will find one
 581 that I don't know now it's my favourite
 582 one so I'm I'm not saying I will do that
 583 in future I'll just choose as I (.) as I go (.)
 584 I don't know so: I feel the same
 585 Alan: what is your favourite job?
 586 Silvia: well could be interpreter but I don't
 587 know it (.) I I've never been an
 588 interpreter so I don't know if it's if it
 589 will be my favourite job the the idea ok
 590 to be an interpreter (.) yeah it would be
 591 good very good but I don't actually
 592 know if that's my job (.) so: (.) we'll see
 593 ((laughs))
 594 Alan: I'm trying to understand because when
 595 we talked you said that was your aim in
 596 life was to be an interpreter it was your
 597 drea:m it would be to realise a dream (.)
 598 and now you're saying you're not sure
 599 I'm just wondering if there's an episode
 600 or something what happened between (.)
 601 Silvia: an episode (.) I don't know
 602 Alan: well episodes or people or

603 Silvia: I think more episodes I can't remember
604 but (.) I haven't I don't have a good
605 memory any more ((laughs)) I don't
606 remember what I ate last night so
607 ((laughs)) er but I think lots of episodes
608 [er:

609 Alan: [in the classroom
610 Or outside the classroom?

611 Silvia: (.) both I think all the people I met in
612 this year (.) er all the opportunities that I
613 came to know about (...) hmm ((smacks
614 lips, exhales)) (.) maybe I was thinking
615 about a future job because I am 2 years
616 late err compared to the others it was
617 like ok I have to get a job soon but now
618 that I am I had this experience in
619 SSLMIT and all the people I met aah
620 I'm saying ok I've been working for 10
621 ah 7 years during summer I will find
622 other jobs if I need to err there's no need
623 to hurry (.) because there are lots of jobs
624 a::nd (..) I want to find out about all
625 those jobs and those opportunities I
626 want to travel so: I don't know I I'm not
627 thinking about job any more (.) I see

628 Alan: hmm

629 Silvia: ((laughs)) er very very far away so (.) I
630 [er:

631 Alan: [it sounds like
632 life has become more complicated (.) am
633 I wrong in interpreting that?

634 Silvia: well complicated err to become an
635 interpreter is quite complicated (.) so: to:
636 (.) to be thinking about reaching that

637 goal (.) ah I think that (.) err leaves a lot
 638 of erm stress (.) er but if you think about
 639 life er (.) one step (.) er (..) at a time (.) I
 640 think you: you enjoy more ((laughs))
 641 just that because sometimes we have this
 642 social stress ok you have to find a job
 643 you're living with your parents money
 644 money money lack of money especially
 645 er you don't really enjoy your life and
 646 your 20 years er now we can enjoy it be-
 647 before we are 40 and then something
 648 else comes to mind as other problems so
 649 I think we should take it more (.) relaxed
 650 (.) I don't know slowly anyway
 651 Alan: right (.) ((takes out handkerchief)) it's ok
 652 (.) erm you you talked about (..)
 653 competition when we talked the first
 654 time
 655 Silvia: yeah (..) well there's a lot of competition
 656 here but I like I'm I don't mind I mean
 657 er I mean each of us is doing his own er
 658 path he chose his own path so: err (..) I
 659 don't know I don't care about others
 660 being challenged I mean I care as long
 661 as erm (.) the friendship is involved but
 662 for (xx) for the I don't know the marks
 663 or that stuff I don't care hmm (..)
 664 Alan: but it was (.) you were very positive
 665 about [competition
 666 Silvia: [yeah (.) yeah
 667 Yeah I like competition because what it's saying
 668 it helps you to go through err challenges
 669 (.) so: (.) it's ok I don't I don't mind
 670 there are people who can't stand just

671 can't stand competition I am not that
 672 kind of person I live (.) w- well with
 673 competition ((laughs)) go on well
 674 Alan: so do you have the same opinion or
 675 different opinion from when you started
 676 the school about competition you said
 677 that it was all very positive everybody
 678 helped each other y- you said you saw it
 679 as a very positive thing
 680 Silvia: [yeah
 681 Alan: [has that
 682 Changed or (.) not
 683 Silvia: hm no (.) at the end I know the people
 684 who are into competition (.) too much
 685 into competition I know people who
 686 aren't and I know how to deal with them
 687 (.) all of them it's just I think it's all
 688 about knowing how to deal with
 689 different people so if you know if you
 690 can't do something with that person or
 691 something else with the other person you
 692 just go on (good well) I don't know
 693 Alan: you say too much (.) it didn't come out
 694 in the first meeting (.) that people are too
 695 much it was all positive in the first
 696 meeting but you say now that people are
 697 too much I mean what does that mean?
 698 Silvia: well I I think it's positive but it's my
 699 point of view it's competition isn't
 700 always positive for other people it's
 701 negative
 702 Alan: yeah
 703 Silvia: all of it
 704 Alan: so what's too much then?

705 Silvia: well [it's
 706 Alan: [from your
 707 Point of view
 708 Silvia: when they say too much it's not from
 709 my point of view from the point of view
 710 in general too much competition I mean
 711 (.) for a:- it doesn't bother me but I
 712 know that maybe it can bother other
 713 people
 714 Alan: for example
 715 Silvia: for example people who: I don't know
 716 ((exhales)) hard to say ((laughs))
 717 Alan: an example (.) where it was too much for
 718 some people
 719 Silvia: ahh (.) writing ideograms Chinese
 720 ideograms (all around) SSLMIT walls
 721 ((laughs))
 722 Alan: what was this?
 723 Silvia: yeah ((laughs)) people like that (.) bu:t
 724 even with those people I have a bond (..)
 725 so: really it doesn't bother me it can
 726 bother other people because I know it
 727 bothers other people because I heard it (.)
 728 [but
 729 Alan: [can you just tell me
 730 what this is about because I'm not sure (.)
 731 writing ideograms around?
 732 Silvia: well there are people who are too much
 733 (.) how do you say in English esaltate
 734 Alan: t- too excited [about
 735 Silvia: [too excited
 736 About doing this type of school we can
 737 say that and they show it too much and in
 738 a strange bizarre way ((laughs))

739 Alan: hm m
 740 Silvia: a:nd not all the people understands this
 741 ways and they say oh my god what is he
 742 doing or is she doing maybe she's not
 743 she's too much into er this (.) language
 744 thing (.) they're too much excited
 745 Alan: what did she do or he do?
 746 Silvia: ((laughs))
 747 Alan: you don't have too mention names just
 748 Silvia: no [no
 749 Alan: [the idea
 750 Silvia: (xx) I can't remember now I just know it's
 751 the behaviour it's the basic behaviour
 752 Alan: one thing that?
 753 Silvia: like writing ideograms all over the place
 754 ((laughs))
 755 Alan: what ideograms
 756 Silvia: I mean writing on the (sheet) and pinning
 757 it pin it to the wall where anybody can see
 758 it (.) so:
 759 Alan: and what would that ideogram signify?
 760 Silvia: no: I mean it's the whole behaviour I can't
 761 just explain it (.) ah you have to know
 762 those people ((laughs)) bu:t as I said I
 763 don't mind it doesn't bother me (.) ahh it
 764 depends on how you take those
 765 behaviours (.) hmm (.) in the whole I think
 766 that those people (.) are excited about this
 767 because they're doing they are doing what
 768 they wanted to do and they want to do it er
 769 in the best way they can (.) so it's taking it
 770 seriously for pe- for some people it's
 771 taking it too much seriously for others it's
 772 ok (..) I think it's ok or speaking the

773 languages all the time for example you
 774 you know 30 people you know that this
 775 person speaks or studies ((laughs))
 776 Portuguese Spanish and French you start
 777 speaking to him in French or Spanish
 778 when- as soon as you see him or her err or
 779 other languages too Chinese Japanese err
 780 sometimes it's a frame of mind (.) who
 781 speaks Chinese every time he sees me and
 782 like oh stop it ((laughs)) I don't like
 783 Chinese please
 784 Alan: this this is an Italian person speaking?
 785 Silvia: yeah exactly well I know please stop it I
 786 ju- I have to go to all the Chinese classes
 787 take the accents and all the (.) the stuff I
 788 don't want to hear it after school (.) so:
 789 ((laughs)) but they're just too excited
 790 about it so they can't stop (.) it's like an
 791 illness we can say but not a negative
 792 illness
 793 Alan: hmm but you don't like it?
 794 Silvia: well it's not that I don't like it sometimes
 795 it's annoying I say ok stop ((laughs)) but
 796 if you just let it be it's not annoying er I
 797 said it depends on how you deal with err
 798 some kind of behaviours so (.) if you
 799 know how to deal with it it's ok (.) it's not
 800 a problem (3.0)((laughs))
 801 Alan: right but there's some people who
 802 obviously insist on speaking these these
 803 languages
 804 Silvia: yeah ((laughs))
 805 Alan: right and you find that?

806 Silvia: well (.) it's good for them because they
 807 can improve (.) sometimes just too much
 808 ((laughs))
 809 Alan: isn't that good for you as well? (..)
 810 Silvia: ahh well (.) it's just that sometimes (.) ahh
 811 you have to stop being what you are what
 812 you usually are (.) mm there's some cases
 813 which you (.) you should heed what the
 814 others have to say (.) and these people
 815 sometimes don't so: (.) they're self
 816 centred or sometimes selfish ((in take of
 817 breath)) so: it's not the case of my friend
 818 he's just self centered he's not selfish but
 819 ((laughs))
 820 Alan: hmm
 821 Silvia: depends on the people (.)
 822 Alan: hmm
 823 Silvia: ahh well I guess that kind of behaviour
 824 which make me improve (.) but it's just
 825 not me I can't do that all the time I speak
 826 other languages when I'm outside the
 827 school but (..) some cases (.) depends (.)
 828 sometimes you don't need to do it (.)
 829 when there are people who don't
 830 understand you can't do it (.) it's rude I
 831 think ((laughs))
 832 Alan: hmm so you speak other languages (.)
 833 with Italians or with people who speak the
 834 languages
 835 Silvia: ah (.) both depends on the cases but
 836 mostly with people who know those
 837 languages (.) otherwise I don't find it very
 838 useful

839 Alan: but Italian students who know the
 840 languages? (.) or the actual people who
 841 speak those languages I mean if you're
 842 speaking to an Italian who's learning
 843 Spanish it's different from a Spanish
 844 person [who's Spanish
 845 Silvia: [exactly what I said
 846 I mean I al- usually speak to those to the
 847 mother lang-?
 848 Alan: mother tongue
 849 Silvia: mother tongue ((laughs))
 850 Alan: (xx)
 851 Silvia: err I don't speak to Italians who speak tha-
 852 that language
 853 Alan: but some people do
 854 Silvia: yeah (.) yeah of course
 855 Alan: and you feel?
 856 Silvia: they can do what ever they want but I
 857 don't find it useful (.) because: er the other
 858 one can't er (.) tell you if you're mistaken
 859 something or not they're not mother
 860 tongue so: sometimes for the fluency it's
 861 good but it depends on the cases as I said
 862 er sometimes there are people who don't
 863 understand that language you just can't
 864 keep speaking that language because you
 865 have to show the world that you know it
 866 ((laughs))
 867 Alan: hm m you think they are showing the
 868 [world they know it
 869 Silvia: [yeah sometimes
 870 Yeah when I say they're excited too much
 871 excited I mean also that
 872 Alan: hmm (.)

873 Silvia: it's rude (.)

874 Alan: how do you interpret that? (...)

875 Silvia: being weak ((laughs)) I mean weak in the
876 meaning of being erm er ah insecure about
877 er oneself (..)

878 Alan: interesting (.) insecure because they speak
879 (2.0) ((silvia laughs)) a language they're
880 learning to other people

881 Silvia: yeah to [other people

882 Alan: [why (xx)

883 Silvia: who who don't understand that language I
884 mean (.) it's sho- if you have to show
885 something to the others it means you're
886 you're insecure about it

887 Alan: hm

888 Silvia: I think I'm not a psych- psy- psychologist
889 but (...) erm because there's no need to do
890 it you know those people don't understand
891 you so ((laughs))

892 Alan: hm so you have people you know

893 Silvia: yeah

894 Alan: who speak a language to- a- other students
895 and they know they don't know that
896 language

897 Silvia: yeah it happen al- to me too (.) ahh once a
898 girl spoke to me in german (.) I just know
899 the numbers in german ((laughs)) a:nd sh-
900 she said oh it's true you don't know
901 german and I like yeah and she kept on
902 speaking german ((laughs)) just to show
903 that she knew it ((in take of breath)) yeah
904 it happens all the time

905 Alan: how did you interpret that? (..)

906 Silvia: being insecure (.) er meaning that she
 907 want the world to to know that she know
 908 more than they do ((laughs)) so: putting
 909 yourself (.) at a higher level than the other
 910 are so: but you know that (.) it just (.) you
 911 (.) try to do it
 912 Alan: hm
 913 Silvia: it's not the real the real thing
 914 Alan: right so they speak a language they know
 915 you don't know ((silvia laughs))
 916 Silvia: yeah it's becoming ((silvia laughs)) a a
 917 game
 918 Alan: yes?
 919 Silvia: a word game
 920 Alan: a wor- between many people? or just a
 921 few do you think
 922 Silvia: err (.) depends on the cases sometimes
 923 there are a lot of people sometimes it's a
 924 restricted group sometimes just one
 925 person who don't know that doesn't know
 926 that language depends tha- ((laughs))
 927 Alan: what if you see that if you see somebody
 928 speaking to an Italian student and they're
 929 both Italian speaking in a language they
 930 know the person doesn't know how do
 931 you interpret that?
 932 Silvia: (...) being insecure (laughs) I told you
 933 Alan: but insecure how do you understand
 934 insecure then
 935 Silvia: because by: er having people (.) erm erm
 936 (..) awe you (.) I mean a.w.e.
 937 Alan: in awe in awe of you
 938 Silvia: in awe of you exactly erm: you you feel
 939 like you're doing something very cool

940 ((laughs)) and you you know something
 941 that the others don't know
 942 Alan: hmm
 943 Silvia: and so you feel more secure about
 944 yourself and you feel that you can do
 945 whatever you want (.) I mean ohh they're
 946 in awe for me so er that's cool yeah keep
 947 being in awe ((laughs)) er (..) all of us
 948 need some people to erm ((exhales)) (.) to
 949 feel as: as- astatic ((ecstatic?)) I don't
 950 know
 951 Alan: to feel [enthusiastic
 952 Silvia: [enthusiastic
 953 to bow to him (.) enthusiastic about
 954 ourselves so (..) er I don't know it's just a
 955 normal process of the mind
 956 Alan: hmm
 957 Silvia: I think
 958 Alan: but when you were talking last time it
 959 seemed more harmonious (.) the
 960 university atmosphere (.) there was
 961 competition but people were helping each
 962 other but you seem to be revealing a
 963 different side now there- there's this sort
 964 of people speaking languages that other
 965 people don't know and they KNOW they
 966 don't know them ((silvia laughs)) that's
 967 different from what you were talking
 968 about at the beginning
 969 Silvia: be- because I'm not bothered about it I'm
 970 not bothered
 971 Alan: but you see it now you didn't see it before
 972 (.) or did you see it before?

973 Silvia: (.) hhh ((exhales)) I can't remember if I've
 974 seen it I didn't care I think I I really I'm
 975 not bothered because I think I know why
 976 people are doing it and even if I don't
 977 know I'm (.) I'm ok with it (.) maybe if
 978 I'm: (.) there I can say something if I'm:
 979 or (.) I just pretend n- not to know what
 980 they are doing mm not to care about what
 981 they are doing
 982 Alan: are these your own colleagues or other
 983 people from other languages only?
 984 Silvia: both
 985 Alan: both
 986 Silvia: yeah
 987 Alan: yeah (.) but I still think that you gave the
 988 impression I think that there was a more
 989 harmonious sense of [sharing
 990 Silvia: [yeah
 991 Alan: the competition was positive and there
 992 was a friendly atmosphere but but what
 993 you're saying now suggests that it isn't
 994 isn't quite as friendly as it was
 995 Silvia: no because err I already told you so I
 996 mean (.) er what I said before in the first
 997 term it was all from my point of view (.)
 998 Alan: right
 999 Silvia: but other people don't like competition (.)
 1000 er my colleagues who were was there that
 1001 day we had this meeting
 1002 Alan: yeah
 1003 Silvia: ((in take of breath)) err they didn't agree (.)
 1004 mm all not all of them maybe some of
 1005 them because they have other points of
 1006 view

1007 Alan: yes
 1008 Silvia: em now I'm trying to (.) er ((small laugh))
 1009 go out from that point of view (.) I mean
 1010 mine and talk as I'm trying to: to speak
 1011 from all the point of views (.) I don't
 1012 know if you understand what I'm saying (.)
 1013 I mean I'm trying to say my point of view
 1014 and then go out from them from it and say
 1015 something that other people told me
 1016 because those are their points of view (.)
 1017 so: I'm just referring I don't know (.) er
 1018 telling you what I've heard (.) other points
 1019 of view
 1020 Alan: (.) so your saying that your talking from
 1021 the point of view of other people now
 1022 Silvia: yeah what I think they think yeah a:nd (.)
 1023 what they told me
 1024 Alan: but when we started this conversation you
 1025 were saying that you'd begun to think
 1026 about yourself through what people were
 1027 talking and saying about you
 1028 Silvia: yeah but=
 1029 Alan: =so now you're suggesting that (.) am I
 1030 am I understanding correctly now you're
 1031 beginning to see not just yourself- other
 1032 people but yourself as well through the
 1033 point of view of other people?
 1034 Silvia: yeah ((laughs))
 1035 Alan: so it's not just you as an isolated case
 1036 Silvia: yeah
 1037 Alan: it's you as a person who has become
 1038 aware of people talking about you
 1039 criticising you making points of view
 1040 about you and you consequentially

1041 looking at them and other people they talk
 1042 about [it seems you (xx)]
 1043 Silvia: [yeah more it's like a web it's like a
 1044 spiders web]
 1045 A: ah it's like spider web
 1046 Silvia: yeah
 1047 Silvia: I I'm not clear when I speak er in every
 1048 language (.) even in Italian I I have all this
 1049 confusion in mind I have never a clear
 1050 idea of what I am s- saying all the time I
 1051 don't have like a plan or something I don't
 1052 follow any plan
 1053 Alan: sure
 1054 Silvia: I just say what comes to my [mind what I
 1055 want to]
 1056 Alan: [sure]
 1057 Silvia: just try to get some information
 1058 Alan: yeah
 1059 Silvia: a:nd (.) I don't know (.) it's like a spider
 1060 web as I said
 1061 Alan: has life become more complicated or is it
 1062 just (..)
 1063 Silvia: er what do you mean?
 1064 Alan: well when we first talked almost 7 or 8
 1065 months ago I presume erm (.) things
 1066 seemed to be more straight forward (.) a
 1067 little bit more clear (.) it seems now there
 1068 is a bit more complexity in the way you're
 1069 talking about things (.) have things
 1070 become more complex? for you do you
 1071 think or [(xx)]
 1072 Silvia: [more than]
 1073 Complex I'd say in Italian articolato
 1074 Alan: more a- (.) sort of like (.) particular

1075 Silvia: like [there's this
 1076 Alan: [individual things
 1077 Silvia: tree ((small laugh)) a lots of branches and
 1078 from each branch other branches coming
 1079 out and from all this each and everyone of
 1080 these branches other branches coming out
 1081 it's not complicated I think it's (..)
 1082 articulato ((laughs)) there are lots of
 1083 things I got to know a:nd in the first time I
 1084 didn't know (..) lo- all all those people of
 1085 these people (.) now: i: know them (..)
 1086 more than I did before I know more of
 1087 them (.) I get I got to know more people
 1088 so it's as I said it's a spiders web a:nd (.)
 1089 if I started talking about my point of view
 1090 now I'm I'm trying to talk about others
 1091 point of view (.)
 1092 Alan: hm
 1093 Silvia: keeping myself erm I mean erm objective
 1094 because they're not my point of view bu:t
 1095 I'm just telling you what I heard what I
 1096 feel about er what they told me (.) and I
 1097 started to think about those things when
 1098 they told me those
 1099 Alan: hm m
 1100 Silvia: things err (.) I started to ta- er think about
 1101 them and I was like ok maybe he's right
 1102 maybe she's right
 1103 Alan: so their influencing you
 1104 Silvia: (..) in some ways yes bu:
 1105 Alan: if you say (.) m sometimes you sound as if
 1106 it's just I've begun to listen to them but
 1107 you seem to say that I'm still separate
 1108 from them (.) but then you say things like

1109 this and it sounds like well their right [that
 1110 means that they're influencing you isn't it?
 1111 Silvia: [we::ll
 1112 well but maybe I think well yeah I notice
 1113 that I mean he did this (xxx) but I i: don't
 1114 I don't care about it ((small laugh)) I still
 1115 don't care about it (.) I I start to noted it
 1116 we can say like that
 1117 Alan: yeh
 1118 Silvia: I start to note things that before I didn't
 1119 notice (.) bu:t it doesn't mean that they
 1120 influence me
 1121 Alan: hm m
 1122 Silvia: I mean maybe I notice now (.) but maybe I
 1123 still don't care ((small laugh)) or I still not
 1124 er (..) bothered about it
 1125 Alan: but you say maybe (.)
 1126 Silvia: yeah (.) depends on the case ((small
 1127 laugh)) you don't have the absolute truth
 1128 er so: (.) I don't know
 1129 Alan: right (.) but there might be somethings
 1130 that do influence you then
 1131 Silvia: yeah (.) of course (.) there's always
 1132 something that influence you (.) now I
 1133 can't recall anything but (.) maybe
 1134 something of those things I heard
 1135 influenced me (.) maybe without me
 1136 knowing it (.)
 1137 Alan: hm m (..) anythings in the classroom the
 1138 teachers that said to you that have changed
 1139 the way you view (.) your (.) the relation
 1140 to languages translation and interpreting
 1141 that made you re-think yourself as an
 1142 interpreter for example?

1143 Silvia: (.) we:ll for example i: I like being among
 1144 people (.) talking to them and for example
 1145 er the interpreter who stands in the cabin
 1146 a;nd translates everything in the cabin I
 1147 don't like that kind of job
 1148 Alan: hm m
 1149 Silvia: when i: was like oh I want to be an
 1150 interpreter I didn't know what it was like
 1151 now stay here I start to understand what it
 1152 is like (.) step by step so: I'm changing my
 1153 point of view of course (..)
 1154 Alan: this is a conference interpreter
 1155 Silvia: yeah for example
 1156 Alan: right but there are different types [of
 1157 interpreter
 1158 Silvia: [there are different
 1159 types of interpreter absolu- exactly for
 1160 example I I don't want to be that kind of
 1161 interpreter let's see wh- what the others do
 1162 Alan: why not?
 1163 Silvia: because I want to stay with people I don't
 1164 like to do my job into a cabin (.) alone I
 1165 want to talk with people so I don't think
 1166 it's my stuff
 1167 Alan: hm m (...) what is your stuff?
 1168 Silvia: ((laughs)) I don't know I'm (.) I'm
 1169 searching (.) I'm still searching for
 1170 something there are several kinds of
 1171 things of
 1172 Alan: but you are beginning to exclude [which
 1173 Silvia: [exactly
 1174 Alan: suggests you are beginning to
 1175 Silvia: exactly
 1176 Alan: if that's not your type of interpreting

1177 Silvia: exactly

1178 Alan: then

1179 Silvia: I'm starting to choose my own path

1180 Alan: hm

1181 S; because now I am er in the real place to do

1182 it

1183 Alan: hm

1184 Silvia: I have something (.) that that help me do it

1185 Alan: right (.) and we (.) talked about talent and

1186 there was an argument there in the group

1187 Silvia: talent yeah (.) if talent exists or not (...)

1188 Alan: any views on that now?

1189 Silvia: well I still think that some people are cut

1190 out to to do (.) something special (.) and

1191 that that what I call talent but (here) I

1192 think with hard work you can improve so

1193 (.) maybe with your hard work (.) you you

1194 can't reach people who are naturally born

1195 to do something but still you can try (.)

1196 Alan: such as? what are some people naturally

1197 born to do? (.) in your opinion

1198 Silvia: well there is a friend of mine (.) he was

1199 naturally born to: to speak languages

1200 ((small laugh)) he can speak (.) any of

1201 them (.) there is a lot of erm hard work

1202 behind it too bu:t (.) he has fluency he has

1203 knowledge (.) he: he has passion (.) and

1204 that's more important and so I like the

1205 way (the good things) come out from

1206 people (.) I'd I'd like for everyone was

1207 can find his own way his own passion er

1208 bu:t since it's not possible (.) well let's see

1209 what happens in the future (..)

1210 Alan: that's a word you used a lot in the
 1211 beginning (.) you said a lot about my
 1212 passion (.)

1213 Silvia: hm m

1214 Alan: has your passion changed?

1215 Silvia: (..) ((exhales deeply)) well er languages
 1216 are still one of my passions bu:t (.) in this
 1217 (...) I think three (.) past three months (..)
 1218 i: I've I've understood that theatre it's one
 1219 of my passion too (.) and mixing them
 1220 together wa:s was great (..) I I love just to
 1221 be to be on stage to stand on stage em
 1222 with people looking at you ah it gives you
 1223 that adrenalin that just few things give you
 1224 so: I'm I'm I'm finding out more about
 1225 myself too these months let's see in the in
 1226 the 2 years coming ((small laugh)) after
 1227 this

1228 Alan: hm (.) is that theatre in different languages
 1229 or just theatre in general? Because you
 1230 were talking about theatre when you were
 1231 doing it in different languages (..) is that
 1232 related to your studies or is it just a
 1233 general desire for theatre?

1234 Silvia: I think it's a general desire for theatre and
 1235 then when languages (.) er are (.)
 1236 combined

1237 Alan: hm

1238 Silvia: with this passion I think it's a powerful
 1239 bomb ((small laugh)) it's perfect for me
 1240 because I love languages too (.) all of
 1241 them (.) there are languages that in this
 1242 year that I understood are not for me (.)
 1243 for example Russian or Slovakian they're

1244 very beautiful languages but I think I'm
 1245 not erm (.) talented for those languages
 1246 Alan: why?
 1247 Silvia: I don't know ah (2.0) you just think it (it
 1248 thinks so) you you see it er: once a: a
 1249 Slovakian guy (.) tried to teach me
 1250 something in Slovakian a:nd we were all
 1251 the night long trying to I was all night
 1252 long trying to repeat it and I couldn't
 1253 bring myself to say it ((laughs)) it was like
 1254 ok I'm not talented for this I'm I don't
 1255 know you just see it and you know it (.)
 1256 Alan: for that specific language
 1257 Silvia: yeah (2.0)
 1258 Alan: but other languages you are? You think or
 1259 Silvia: well ((small laugh)) I think so maybe I'm
 1260 not talented but I'm keener on them than I
 1261 am on Russian or Slovakian
 1262 Alan: why do you think that's the case?
 1263 Silvia: (...) because there are languages I see that
 1264 there are languages that erm came came to
 1265 me I can tell I don't know (.) naturally
 1266 more natural (.)
 1267 Alan: you're more attracted to them perhaps
 1268 they're more immediate more spontaneous
 1269 for you
 1270 Silvia: yeah exactly
 1271 Alan: hm
 1272 Silvia: spontaneous (.) they came spontaneously
 1273 (..) they don't they are those I am forced
 1274 to speak I feel this stress when I'm
 1275 speaking them (.) I mean even in English
 1276 ah: I think I made lots of mistake today
 1277 but I don't care I mean I care ((laughs))

1278 because er I'm studying it but I like
 1279 speaking in English and even if I make
 1280 even if I made lots of mistakes ah: I can
 1281 improve and I want to improve (.) I like
 1282 speaking it reading it and listening to to it
 1283 ((exhales)) (.) Slovakian Russian I like
 1284 those languages but I just (can't ?) feel
 1285 them like they are my languages (.) I start
 1286 I wasn't sure about my second language at
 1287 the beginning I: attended Chinese both
 1288 Chinese and Russian classes and then i: I
 1289 chose Chinese even if chi- I have a (.)
 1290 struggle with Chinese because it's very
 1291 difficult and I don't know if I'm keen on it
 1292 but I like it more than (.) I think it's more
 1293 appropriate than Russian for me
 1294 Alan: hm
 1295 Silvia: ((small laugh)) Japanese too (.) er (..) I I
 1296 feel like I can do it (.) French Spanish (..)
 1297 m: I don't know it's just a thing that you
 1298 feel I can't explain it I don't really I can't
 1299 explain it (2.0)
 1300 Alan: no no? (..)
 1301 ((small laugh))
 1302 Alan: no words you can give this to express this
 1303 desire for (..) Chinese and Japanese but
 1304 not russian or Slovak?
 1305 Silvia: well you feel like er: (..) there's th- there's
 1306 this river (.) flowing (..) er: (.) into your (.)
 1307 in your inside I don't know when you are
 1308 speaking a language you are keen (.) on
 1309 and well ((small laugh)) but when you I
 1310 don't know when I was learning Russian
 1311 or Slovakian I was like ok maybe not I

1312 don't feel this bond with this language we
 1313 can say like that it's like when you meet a
 1314 friend when you meet a peop- a person (.)
 1315 sometimes you know that that person will
 1316 be your friend sometimes you know that
 1317 that person won't be your friend because
 1318 you don't feel it (.) you don't feel the
 1319 bond we can say like that I don't know if
 1320 it helps you understand but I don't know
 1321 how to express it (.)
 1322 Alan: no I understand (.) it's sort of a deep
 1323 seated feeling [inside you
 1324 Silvia: [yeah yeah
 1325 You feel it's:
 1326 Alan: is it the sound of the language you think
 1327 or is the language
 1328 Silvia: hm (.) all of it ((small laugh))
 1329 Alan: is it an image you have in your mind of
 1330 the people? (..) or not
 1331 Silvia: (..) er: you mean (.) people er (..) linked to
 1332 that language?
 1333 Alan: yes
 1334 Silvia: (.) like er: stereotypes
 1335 Alan: could be
 1336 Silvia: (3.0) well (.) I don't know (.) well
 1337 ((laughs)) for a girl maybe it's better
 1338 choosing Russian than Chinese I mean
 1339 Russian people are tall and blonde and
 1340 with er I don't know blue eyes and
 1341 Chinese are (.) are ((laughs)) Chinese so: I
 1342 don't think it's all: that it's that I mean (..)
 1343 even the culture the Culture? Yes (.) erm I
 1344 like Chinese culture and Japanese culture
 1345 a:nd maybe also the thing that since I have

1346 always been interested in er things so far
 1347 away from me from us our culture maybe
 1348 it's that (.) because russian it's different
 1349 but it's not that far away I think they still
 1350 have some kind of link to us (.) er: even
 1351 the language (.) it's an alphabetic one I
 1352 want I wanted to change completely (.)
 1353 point of view (.)
 1354 Alan: well Russian is Cyrillic not alphabetic it's
 1355 not [the
 1356 Silvia: [yeah but
 1357 the Cyrillic is an alphabet (.)
 1358 Alan: [ahh
 1359 Silvia: [there are letters
 1360 Alan: right I understand it's not the same
 1361 [alphabet
 1362 Silvia: [no
 1363 because the Chinese and and Japanese
 1364 instead have this ideograms pictograms [and
 1365 Alan: [right
 1366 Silvia: so on (.) it's completely different and so I
 1367 wanted to change everything from the
 1368 start and maybe it's that we're on the
 1369 extreme sides (...) ((laughs)) seek for
 1370 something different I think (.)
 1371 Alan: right (..) so just (.) to finish what (.) how
 1372 do you see the next (..) couple of years
 1373 developing what are your (.) what's your
 1374 view of the future do you think at this
 1375 point
 1376 Silvia: well I'm positive always positive? I think
 1377 I am a positive person even thinking about
 1378 the future (.) er I can't wait to go in
 1379 erasmus ((small laugh)) and we will see I

1380 don't like making plans for the future I
 1381 just like to live the day (.) er now and here
 1382 because since I have been in er in London
 1383 I I started to think like this to enjoy every
 1384 single minute hour day and week
 1385 Alan: you were in London when were you in
 1386 London?
 1387 S; ah 2 years ago i:=
 1388 Alan: =so before SSLMIT?
 1389 Silvia: yeah before (.) and I st- I learnt how to
 1390 enjoy life (.) day by day (.) so:
 1391 Alan: before now
 1392 Silvia: no because in here they all live like it's a
 1393 (plan full of) I don't like them a kind of
 1394 thinking (.) er: the society I mean (.) yeah
 1395 you have to do this 5 years old (..) of high
 1396 school and then blah blah blah no when
 1397 I've been in London I learnt that everyday
 1398 something different can happen to you so
 1399 I: I like to think that way (.) I don't know
 1400 what is going to happen in these 2 years
 1401 coming I don't really care ((small laugh))
 1402 we'll see
 1403 Alan: (..) so if you're an interpreter or not an
 1404 interpreter
 1405 Silvia: we (are here) I don't know it doesn't mean
 1406 that I I won't be studying or trying hard to
 1407 to reach my goal but since my goal is not
 1408 that clear any more we will see what is
 1409 going to be
 1410 Alan: hm (.) but if you say you're not sure of
 1411 your goal but you're going towards your
 1412 goal it would suggest [that some goal
 1413 Silvia: [yeah

1414 Alan: is there some where ((silvia laughs))

1415 Silvia: yeah because I mean my goal is to know

1416 those languages (.) right

1417 Alan: right

1418 Silvia: so I'm studying to know those languages

1419 (.) and that's (..) for sure ((small laugh))

1420 Then we'll see if I (..) (I don't know if)

1421 am becoming an interpreter or not

1422 Alan: right

1423 Silvia: I it's a way to ah:: to reach (.) my f::irst

1424 goal but since I'm not sure what is going

1425 to be my: next goal or if it's gonna be the

1426 same (.) ah: I'm just working day by day

1427 to to reach it and then if there's erm a a

1428 path to choose I will choose then I don't

1429 care now ((laughs))

1430 Alan: so you're open to

1431 Silvia: yeah open to different things

1432 Alan: so learning language is the most important

1433 thing

1434 Silvia: yeah and having fun

1435 Alan: and having fun

1436 Silvia: yeah

1437 Alan: yeah (.) is it easy to have fun here?

1438 Silvia: (2.0) well it's forli forli is not for fun but

1439 if you are surrounded by the: the right

1440 people you can have fun whenever you

1441 want and wherever you want

1442 Alan: right because some people say you know

1443 erm (.) SSLMIT students are very serious

1444 they study a lot

1445 Silvia: well but they are fun too ((small laugh))

1446 we're not robot or machines I mean (.) I

1447 want to try it to try hard to reach my goal

1448 to know those languages at the same time
1449 I want to enjoy what I am doing because if
1450 you: start thinking ok I have to study hard
1451 (.) and no time for that no time for this
1452 well maybe you end up hating what
1453 you're doing so I I don't like that thought
1454 Alan: hmm
1455 Silvia: so I want to have fun too
1456 Alan: I hope you have lots of fun
1457 Silvia: thank you
1458 Alan: we'll stop there then thank you very much

Group interview 2: Second interview

- 1 Alan: well thank you for coming
2 welcome back I want to start off
3 with a question about the exams
4 I mean how did you find the
5 exam period any episodes or
6 experiences you'd like to talk
7 about? (4.0)
8 Maria: nightmares
9 Alan: nightmares?
10 ((general laughter))
11 Alan: (..) why?
12 Maria: erm last night I dreamt I was
13 coming to my Chinese exam
14 and I met giacomo and he
15 knows everything about
16 Chinese (.) and he came to me
17 and said oh my god I forgot it (.)
18 what? (.) I forgot how to say (.)
19 circumcissione ((Italian for
20 circumcision)) ((general
21 laughter)) (.) horrible
22 Silvia: erm I dreamt that we were (xx)
23 and one of my friend was er::
24 magician? I don't know and she
25 could make the: er: (..) how do
26 you say (xx)?
27 Maria: she could advocate
28 Silvia: (advocate) animals (.) so
29 Alan: advocate animals?
30 Maria: (advocate)

31 (xx) ((joint voices))
 32 Matteo: summon
 33 Silvia: (summonly) summon
 34 Alan: summon animals?
 35 Silvia: yeah something (xxx) I don't
 36 know ((small laugh)) just you er
 37 picture something and you have
 38 to draw something on the floor
 39 (.) then you put your hand on it
 40 and then the animal comes (.) so
 41 it's a bit strange yeah (.)
 42 nightmares
 43 Maria: nightmares
 44 Fed: I dreamt I went to the groceries
 45 (xx) ((whispered voice and
 46 overlapping talk))
 47 Alan: you went where?
 48 Fed: to buy groceries and fruit and
 49 stuff it was kind of a normal
 50 dream
 51 ((general laughter))
 52 Alan: in Italian?
 53 Fed: yeah yeah in Italian
 54 Silvia: that's the weirdest one (.)
 55 groceries? ((tone of disbelief))
 56 Fed: well it sounded weird but you
 57 know summon animals and (.)
 58 circumcissione (..)
 59 Alan: yeah=
 60 Fed: =I guess my (.) bag of fruit was
 61 normal
 62 Alan: yes (.) was it a nightmare?
 63 Fed: no no it was absolutely (.)
 64 boringly normal

65 Alan: ((laughs)) anybody else a (.)
 66 [dreams (.) experiences?
 67 [((overlapping talk))
 68 Maria: [another one for chinese
 69 Fed: [(xxx)
 70 Maria: another one about Chinese erm
 71 (.) the exam was in a church and
 72 ((federico snorts a laugh)) I had
 73 to kneel cos in a church you
 74 have to kneel a:nd (.) so we're
 75 kneeling down and I was
 76 writing and I was writing it in
 77 the cyrillic alphabet? pinyin
 78 which is chinese the chinese
 79 transcription
 80 Alan: right
 81 Maria: and I couldn't stop writing in
 82 Cyrillic (..) [and (xxxx)
 83 Silvia: [she mixed russian
 84 [and Chinese
 85 Maria: [I was mixing
 86 Russian and Chinese (.) so all
 87 together
 88 Alan: right
 89 Maria: [and
 90 Alan: [wh- what church was this
 91 Was it greek orthodox? =
 92 Maria: = I have no idea and the
 93 proforessa wasn't the real one
 94 but she was (.) e:m the bad
 95 headmaster from matilda
 96 ((general loud laughter)) it was
 97 (.) remarkable
 98 Fed: [god I love my grocery dream

99 [((overlapping talk))

100 Maria: (xx) stick to it

101 Alan: talking about the exams

102 themselves I mean wh- di- did

103 you experience what you were

104 expecting to experience? Were

105 you happy about (.) the

106 outcomes? (...)

107 Maria: m: not all of them (.) I wasn't

108 happy about Russian I went

109 there and I had (.) like blank

110 wall I couldn't remember

111 anything

112 Alan: hm

113 Maria: and I knew I hadn't done a er (.)

114 written part (.) written exam (.)

115 so I was freaking out and I'm

116 doing it again in September (.)

117 Alan: why?

118 Maria: because it wasn't a mark I'm

119 going to take (.) it was a lower

120 mark than I expected and I

121 don't want to have that mark on

122 my (.) curricula

123 Alan: hm m=

124 Maria: =curriculum

125 Alan: [right

126 Maria: [so i'm doing it again

127 In september

128 Alan: hm cos we did talk about this

129 aspect that some times you are

130 not allowed to refuse your

131 marks (.) some people had that

132 experience

133 Maria: federico do you want to talk
 134 about it? ((small laugh))
 135 Fed: oh I couldn't refuse a er failed
 136 exam (.) I would have accepted
 137 it but ((general laughter)) but no
 138 I I just failed
 139 [((overlapping talk))]
 140 Rosa: [(in the end)]
 141 Fed: [(xxxxx)]
 142 Rosa: in mediation
 143 they said we could (.) no:?
 144 Silvia: [yeah at the end=
 145 Fed: [(xxxx)]
 146 Maria: =but they said we're (doing it for
 147 you) (.) that's great
 148 Silvia: because we went to talk with (.)
 149 marzabotto and I
 150 Maria: someone else
 151 Alan: which mediation is this now from?
 152 Maria: ah English to Italian it was
 153 mediation so it was both (.) and
 154 Fed: so we could in the end?
 155 Maria: we could yeah
 156 Fed: oh thank god I (didn't) refuse
 157 ((general laughter)) (the point of
 158 it) I I was really tempted to refuse
 159 for (...) just because I wanted
 160 (them) to have to explain to me
 161 that I couldn't refuse ((laughter))
 162 I was adorable an- and pathetic at
 163 the same time thank god I didn't
 164 then

165 Alan: yeah so there was confusion there
 166 about whether you could or
 167 couldn't (.) [refuse
 168 Maria: [we we
 169 can
 170 Alan: right
 171 Maria: because there is there are some
 172 written rules in the statuto dello
 173 studente ((student rules and
 174 regulations)) and we can refuse a
 175 mark
 176 Alan: how do you know this?
 177 Fed: oh because it's [written
 178 Maria: [it's written
 179 ((overlapping talk))
 180 it's the law
 181 Silvia: one of our friends found it
 182 Maria: =but not [just that
 183 Alan: [so one of your friends
 184 looked for it?
 185 Silvia: yeah
 186 Maria: yeah=
 187 Alan: =so why did they look for it?
 188 Silvia: because she was worried about
 189 this whole situation so she look
 190 some documents and she found it
 191 and then when she found it she
 192 erm (.) brought it to: belafonte I think
 193 Maria: yeah
 194 Silvia: I think (.) the name of the
 195 professor
 196 Alan: hm m
 197 Silvia: so: erm

198 Alan: so she brought it because she was
 199 complaining?
 200 Maria: no
 201 Silvia: no: [she
 202 Maria: [last year they couldn't refuse
 203 the mark ((matteo makes noise))
 204 while it's written that we can
 205 even though you got 29 you were
 206 looking for a 30 you can refuse it
 207 I mean it's not [the best thing to
 208 do
 209 Fed: [it's university (I
 210 mean) it's not high school
 211 Maria: yeah
 212 Matteo: yeah but there were rules even
 213 last years (..) [even past years so
 214 Silvia: [(xxxxxx)
 215 Matteo: it's quite strange=
 216 Silvia: =it's just that no one looked for it
 217 Matteo: m:: all the the universities know
 218 this things (.) the SSLMIT no
 219 Alan: hm
 220 Matteo: and I can say this because I
 221 come from the university la
 222 sapienza a big university (.) and
 223 I have found I have found
 224 several things here in the
 225 SSLMIT (.) that are quite
 226 strange ((federico laughs)) they
 227 are very different (.)
 228 Fed: (xxx)
 229 Matteo: and well I know that the
 230 SSLMIT was not a university
 231 was a was a professional school

232 another sort of institution (.)
 233 a:nd well and then it became a:
 234 university but the structure it's
 235 self remained (..) er the the one
 236 of the professional school (.)
 237 a:nd
 238 Silvia: the thing is that when went to
 239 speak to: (..) belafonte and also
 240 the other professor the one who
 241 was going to: erm to do
 242 linguistics next year
 243 Maria: marasciotto=
 244 Matteo: =marasciotto
 245 Silvia: marasciotto er he talked to us he
 246 he told us that erm you can
 247 refuse it (..) it's just that it's not
 248 (..) advi- it's not like=
 249 Matteo: =advisable=
 250 Silvia: =advised I mean your 29 come
 251 on
 252 Maria: yeah of course [but
 253 Silvia: [they had to do
 254 [more job and
 255 [((overlapping talk))
 256 Maria: (xx) take 22 and [(xx)
 257 [((overlapping
 258 talk))
 259 Silvia: he said ok I can understand a 22
 260 all right and if someone has
 261 some problem with the (ergo)
 262 about money for (nation) I don't
 263 know (refund) (..) erm: maybe
 264 ok you need a thirty ok we do
 265 the exam again but just in that

266 case you have to tell me he told
 267 us
 268 Fed: (xxx) ((sniggers)) a lot if he
 269 doesn't want me to refuse a 29
 270 if I want (all) thirty I I would go
 271 (personally) I would go with all
 272 19 it's not a problem but if I
 273 want to have only 30s in my
 274 curriculum (.) I should be
 275 Silvia: well in that case they're not that
 276 understanding ok
 277 ((overlapping talk))
 278 I'm just saying what they told
 279 me ok ((talks over the others))
 280 ((overlapping talk))
 281 Alan: ok ok sorry to interrupt you
 282 Michele was talking about in
 283 our one to one interview talking
 284 about the: the choice of being
 285 able to or not being able to
 286 refuse your mark actually it
 287 came up at the exam
 288 Silvia: [(xxxxxx)]
 289 Matteo: [ah: no last year
 290 the: this this matter came up at
 291 the exam (.) so I know this erm
 292 because er my flat mate was is
 293 erm a second year student (.)
 294 Alan: hm m
 295 Matteo: and he told me that last year
 296 they didn't know anything (.)
 297 and at the exam the: professor
 298 said er: well (.) you cannot
 299 refuse the er the mark

300 Alan: hm m
 301 Matteo: you: just we will do the exam in
 302 with several groups and then we:
 303 we will say er: there are no
 304 scores under 24 for example (..)
 305 er and that's it
 306 Alan: right ok so so that was last year=
 307 Fed: =cos also this year we asked
 308 Silvia: [yeah
 309 Fed: [because he [(xxxxxxxxxx)
 310 Maria: [yeah we asked
 311 ((Federico talks in background))
 312 cos we knew that somebody
 313 Fed: and then we asked a professor
 314 because otherwise they wouldn't
 315 have told us anything
 316 ((silvia talks in background))
 317 Alan: what did they say?
 318 Fed: oh they said oh yes it was so last
 319 year I don't know this year
 320 because the co-ordinator changed
 321 and this year it was professor
 322 (cara) I think
 323 Alan: hm m
 324 Fed: and last year it was someone else
 325 (.) and they didn't know if this
 326 year there would have been the
 327 same kinda of (.) er rules
 328 Alan: hm m (.) ok so it was confusing
 329 Fed: but then
 330 Silvia: yeah
 331 Fed: they told us that there was [(xx)
 332 Silvia: [ok (.) we got it
 333 Matteo: yeah but the Sslmit is confused

334 Silvia: yeah
 335 ((federico sniggers))
 336 Matteo: I am quite disappointed
 337 ((general low laughter))
 338 Alan: why why why are you
 339 disappointed?
 340 Matteo: because for example even at the
 341 er mediation exam (.) erm i: had
 342 to do the exam for less credits
 343 Alan: hm m
 344 Matteo: i: wrote (.) more than 10 e-mails
 345 (.) to all the professors (.) of the
 346 erm mediation class (.) and when
 347 I did it the exam (.) they said (.)
 348 what do you have to do? who are
 349 you? Less credits why? (...)
 350 Alan: right so you got no response
 351 Matteo: m: here at the Sslmit they don't
 352 have classrooms with (.) 500
 353 students (.)
 354 ((Federico laughs))
 355 Alan: hm m
 356 Matteo: like in the sapienza university (.)
 357 they have (.) 24 students 60
 358 students (.) ah (.) and I find i: i
 359 find it quite disappointing erm
 360 (2.0)
 361 Alan: ok=
 362 Fed: =I noticed that our professor feel
 363 like erm don't feel the (.) ea:se of
 364 working here I mean it's surely
 365 mainly because it's a very good
 366 school but they don't understand

367 they have 30 students top (..) and
368 it's
369 Alan: what do you mean they don't
370 understand?
371 Fed: they don't they they: they keep
372 the same for example timetables
373 that they would for example to
374 correct an exam as if they had
375 500 students or they used the erm:
376 they act as if they had the
377 (burocracy) bureaucracy weight
378 of (.) that much students as (..)
379 well they really don't
380 Alan: hm m
381 Fed: and it's not like I'm asking for a:
382 an apple on the table every
383 morning when I come into the
384 classroom but (.)
385 ((silvia sniggers))
386 I'd like to (.) [since i
387 Silvia: [sometimes the
388 same class=
389 Fed: =yeah exactly=
390 Silvia: =is split into 2 teachers (.) it
391 doesn't make sense and they took
392 a lot time to examine I don't
393 know the exams
394 Alan: this whole aspect of the 2
395 teachers for 1 course what were
396 your experiences with that
397 particular (.) system
398 Maria: I don't think it's (.) the best way
399 to do it
400 Alan: why?

401 Maria: cos it's quite confusing and I
 402 think it's good for the (.) for the
 403 lesson and the learning itself but
 404 it's not good for exam because
 405 you keep getting two different
 406 type of erm requests and
 407 explanation of the exam of how
 408 it's gonna be and what do you
 409 what do they expect? We keep
 410 receiving 2 totally different
 411 things
 412 Alan: is that just in 1 course or in
 413 other courses?
 414 Maria: in 2 courses it was translation
 415 and mediation (.) and=
 416 Silvia: =well the teachers linked to
 417 some programmes (.) as
 418 erasmus for example (.) they
 419 they don't exist they're ghosts
 420 ((small laugh)) you are tempted
 421 to cut your own head off
 422 your own neck ((small laugh))
 423 because you can't find them you
 424 sent e-mails nobody answers (.)
 425 from the first moment you choose
 426 to go on an erasmus until the last
 427 one when they recognise all of
 428 your exams you are (.) you are
 429 not yourself ((small laugh))
 430 you're out of your mind so it's
 431 it's very confusing well they are
 432 more organised than other
 433 universities I think but it's not the
 434 top one anyway so (..)

435 Alan: hm just to change subject looking
 436 back now because this is the end
 437 of your first year (.) and the
 438 initial research was based on you
 439 being interested in being
 440 interpreters (.) so looking back
 441 what sort of skills do you think
 442 are important to be an interpreter?
 443 What have you learnt from your
 444 teachers? (.) What have they said
 445 or done or haven't said or done
 446 that have perhaps made you
 447 change your (.) ideas
 448 of what it means to be an
 449 interpreter (7.0)
 450 Maria: I think professor sabatelli was
 451 one of the best one (.) in talking
 452 about the interpreter profession
 453 because she (.) everytime we
 454 were going mediation in class
 455 and we're talking with in front of
 456 other people she was always
 457 saying ok you have the control of
 458 the situation so: just remember to
 459 keep calm you're not you do not
 460 have to erm (.) like erm beg for
 461 mer:cy if you don't remember
 462 one thing it is your job they're
 463 talking too fast or they are talking
 464 too much so just keep calm this is
 465 your job this is your moment (.)
 466 and she was always saying
 467 remember not to cross your arms
 468 because it's not to present (.)

469 yourself and do not dress in erm
 470 (.) in an unproper way just
 471 remember to be always polite
 472 a:nd (.) oh she was always saying
 473 keep your voice loud because we
 474 all have to hear you this is (.)
 475 keep your voice loud because we
 476 all have to hear you this is (.) like
 477 your voice this is your instrument
 478 to work (.) and so I think she was
 479 one of the best to remember us all
 480 what we are doing here (.) apart
 481 from the apart from those whose
 482 want to be a translator (.) but for
 483 interpreter she was really doing a
 484 great job (.) I think (.)
 485 Alan: (.) everybody else? (8.0) is that
 486 practical that that explanation
 487 you're in control and so on do
 488 [do you
 489 Maria: [yeah
 490 she was always saying it to
 491 everybody whilst doing
 492 mediation
 493 Alan: but did you have any experiences
 494 then that sort of with other (.)
 495 teachers that perhaps (..)
 496 contradicted that position or:
 497 Maria: er no but she was the first one to
 498 actually tell us
 499 Fed: [(xxxxx) ((Federico talks in
 500 background)
 501 Silvia: [she highlighted it very often=
 502 Maria: =no not the only one but she was

503 ((federico continues talking in
504 background))
505 Silvia: she highlighted it she reminded
506 very often [and
507 ((Maria talks in background))
508 Alan: [rosa
509 Silvia: when we were at the exams well
510 we've seen I think all of us seen
511 that (.) it was the proper way to
512 do (..) an exam like that (.)
513 Alan: hm m
514 Silvia: so yeah you can be anxious but
515 you have not to show it so: be
516 calm (.) relax (.) understand what
517 they're telling you and then you
518 have to have the control of the
519 situation so
520 Alan: did that help you in the exam
521 then or in the mediation exams?
522 Silvia: hm (.) well I think yes it depends
523 on (.) each and every one
524 experiences so (.) in my
525 experience yes
526 Fed: actually I thought (.) I think I was
527 really lucky in the (..) dialogue I
528 had (.) it was also the first one
529 they were doing I was the third
530 person they were (or even the
531 second) so they were probably
532 very calm and (.) but it was- it
533 sound to me that it was easier
534 than the (.) the one we done in
535 class
536 Maria: well all of [my exams

537 Fed: [I had
 538 Maria: have been like that
 539 ((background talk))
 540 Alan: sorry they've all being easier?
 541 Maria: yeah (.) than what I expected (...)
 542 Silvia: apart from the
 543 Maria: Chinese today was way easier
 544 than I expected
 545 Silvia: ja- Japanese wasn't ((stilted
 546 laugh)) but it was ok I know how
 547 my teacher's so she's like that (..)
 548 [and
 549 Maria: [(they) were
 550 definitely shorter but I think they
 551 were the same level it's just that
 552 you were more prepared at the
 553 exam than what you were in class
 554 Silvia: yeah=
 555 Maria: =a little bit ((Mick makes sound))
 556 Silvia: maybe they I think maybe they
 557 did it oh sorry (.) [go on
 558 Matteo:
 559 [no no no=
 560 Silvia: =ok (.) maybe they did it because
 561 they want it ((talks in low voice
 562 to maria)) ok ((laughs)) because
 563 they want us to: (..) to be
 564 prepared so: they were I don't
 565 know (.) tougher during the class
 566 and then at the exam they were
 567 (.) cooler just calm and I think it
 568 that's the way so we were ok (.)
 569 it seemed better than what we
 570 practiced so (.) we can do it

571 Alan: right ok (.) so you you were
 572 quite happy about the exams?
 573 Silvia: yeah yeah it was (.) faster
 574 shorter ((small laugh)) (.) easier
 575 (.) so ok (.) yeah
 576 Alan: good (..) so are we all still
 577 convinced we want to be
 578 interpreters or have we
 579 Matteo: yes
 580 Silvia: (x) don't know i don't think so
 581 ((whispered voice))
 582 Matteo: yes I think I will miss the (.) the
 583 classes of the next year because
 584 I will be in erasmus (.) at the
 585 university of bonn in germany (.)
 586 they: they don't have mediation
 587 classes (.) I will just do
 588 translation (.) and so I think I
 589 will miss the mediation and but
 590 I think the third year I will
 591 attend both classes (.) the
 592 second year one and the third
 593 year one
 594 Alan: right
 595 Matteo: because I don't want to miss (.)
 596 anything
 597 Alan: hm because you said in our one
 598 to one interview you were
 599 talking about (.) erm (.) what
 600 was the name of the professor
 601 again?
 602 Matteo: moscato
 603 Alan: moscato you said that it's most
 604 important to learn the language

605 but when you return here she
 606 can teach you
 607 everything about [interpreting
 608 in one hour
 609 Matteo: [ah yes
 610 ((laughs) (.)
 611 in an hour ((laughs))
 612 Fed: everything about what?
 613 Matteo: about mediation
 614 Fed: oh (hello) that's flattering (.)
 615 Alan: what do you think about [that?
 616 Matteo: [(she's mad)
 617 Fed: wh- why am I even here
 618 studying then? (..)
 619 ((rosa gives a small laugh))
 620 Matteo: tell her (.) ((rosa gives a small
 621 laugh)) ask her (...)
 622 Alan: I don't know I mean (.) you you
 623 said you thought she was just
 624 kidding
 625 Matteo: yes
 626 Fed: ok then
 627 Rosa: when did she say that?
 628 Matteo: er when well i: just I was just
 629 asking erm which university
 630 was the best (.) (London or
 631 bonn) and I just said well but I
 632 think but I will miss the: the:
 633 mediation classes and she said
 634 no: it's ok the most important
 635 thing is to: master the language
 636 (..) a:nd the the technique (.)
 637 comes after I can teach you it in:

638 in an hour (.) that's it (.) but I
 639 think she was kidding
 640 Silvia: she must be great (.) at teaching
 641 ((irony in voice)) cool
 642 Matteo: she's a great interpreter but
 643 she's not a great teacher
 644 ((federico laughs))
 645 Matteo: hm (...)
 646 Alan: in our initial conversations we
 647 talked about maturity and er
 648 coming to university is different
 649 from high school (..) erm is that
 650 is that your opinion still?
 651 You've got a very different
 652 experience from high school
 653 here? And if so why or how?
 654 (5.0) ((all look around))
 655 ((Federico makes a sound
 656 through his teeth and silvia
 657 starts sniggering))
 658 Matteo: I think the Sslmit is organised
 659 like an high school
 660 Fed: yea:[:h
 661 Rosa: [yeah
 662 Silvia: yeah
 663 Maria: [(it is)
 664 Matteo: [yes
 665 Maria: because we're not that many I
 666 think
 667 Fed: hm m
 668 Silvia: I think it's [worse
 669 Maria: [(..) but it's also
 670 because since we are not that
 671 many we know each other more

672 than what normally happens in a
 673 university I think (.) and so it
 674 was possible to organise the (.)
 675 trash party (.) ((silvia sniggers))
 676 I don't think any other
 677 university in the world is doing
 678 it apart from the american
 679 college (..)

680 Alan: trash party?

681 Maria: yeah [it was a trash party

682 Matteo: [yeah

683 Alan: what is a trash party?

684 Maria: [don't you remember how (all of
 685 them were) dressed up?

686 Rosa: [it's a party (organised)

687 Alan: I wasn't here
 688 (xxxxxx)
 689 ((overlapping voices))

690 Rosa: [(xx)

691 Silvia: [and the music
 692 (xxxxxx)
 693 ((overlapping voices))
 694 ((federico giggles))

695 Maria: no no it was like (..) trash (.) trash
 696 music and [(.) trash

697 Silvia: [well you don't wear as
 698 you usually wear you can say
 699 ((laughs))

700 Maria: yeah

701 Silvia: you can put on anything
 702 ANYTHING

703 Maria: I was wearing a sock that I
 704 usually use (.) as a pet

705 Alan: a pet?

706 Fed: (xx)
 707 Silvia: I had a (hand)
 708 Alan: [you use a sock as a pet
 709 Maria: [(it was all fir)
 710 yes (.) it was a sock up to the
 711 knee (all) fir around we usually
 712 put it in a box and it's our pet
 713 Silvia: I had a (hand) attached to my
 714 blouse ((laughs)) ((alan laughs))
 715 Maria: there were people dressed with
 716 a erm=
 717 Fed: =why do you [use a
 718 Maria: [rubbish bag
 719 Fed: sock as a pet?
 720 Rosa: yeah ((laughs)) exactly=
 721 Maria: =cos it's all made of made of fir
 722 Fed: oh [(xxx)
 723 Maria: [and it really looks like a
 724 kitten or something ((federico
 725 sniggers)) we call it (procioni
 726 cassetta?)
 727 Fed: ok
 728 ((silvia laughs))
 729 Alan: sorry I'm losing track here what
 730 is this is relationship from high
 731 school to university?
 732 Maria: cos u- usually you organise are
 733 able to organise a party at a high
 734 school definitely not at
 735 [university not that I've ever
 736 heard of
 737 Fed: [(xxxxxxx)
 738 Silvia: no [it's

739 Maria: [(what) the whole university
740 inside of the university?
741 Fed: only because there's=
742 Silvia: =no=
743 Maria: =not possible=
744 Fed: =about=
745 Silvia: =well=
746 Fed: about 3000 people but
747 Silvia: well I'd be in (S.I.G) the
748 ((laughs)) the international
749 sciences whatever it was way
750 different (.) way (.) different
751 Alan: ah ha (.) but this ability to
752 organise a party erm I I'm
753 thinking of perhaps about
754 different things why it's more
755 like a high school
756 Maria: yeah but [I was
757 Alan: [not because you can
758 (xx)
759 organise a party ((general
760 laughter))
761 Maria: (x) it was an example ah that
762 since we are (.) this few able to
763 do more things or less things
764 than other university (.) like I'm
765 really happy we're organised
766 like a high school because (.)
767 it's the end of june and I'm (xxx)
768 and those who are really late
769 have still one week of (.) of
770 exams the first week of july (in
771 turin they've started now it's the)

772 first week of the summer
 773 session
 774 Alan: so as a high school is it goo- is
 775 it good that SSLMIT is like a
 776 high school then? [you seem to
 777 be suggesting
 778 Maria: [for some things
 779 it is for others you just want to
 780 get out of high school ((Silvia
 781 sniggers)) and be a grown up (..)
 782 woman (or)
 783 Alan: there's a little confu- I'm a bit
 784 confused here because you're
 785 saying
 786 [on one side
 787 Silvia: [I'm (.)
 788 yeah (.) I find good sides and
 789 bad sides
 790 Alan: what are the bad sides as a high
 791 school like hm atmosphere?
 792 Maria: like the
 793 Fed: (that it is an) high school
 794 Maria: that it is an high school
 795 Alan: but I don't know what that
 796 means
 797 Silvia: teachers know [you
 798 Maria: [teachers
 799 knows know you and (...) that's
 800 main thing and that (2.0) it's a
 801 high school and you still feel
 802 like you're being checked every
 803 single day (.) a:nd you're not a
 804 grown up woman yet
 805 Alan: hm (.) or man

806 Rosa: or man ((laughs))
 807 Fed: thank you
 808 ((overlapping talk))
 809 Matteo: can I say everything?
 810 Alan: yes
 811 Matteo: [ok
 812 Alan: [anonymity
 813 guaranteed here
 814 Matteo: ok
 815 Alan: anonymity
 816 ((Federico laughs))
 817 Silvia: (wow)
 818 Matteo: I think the Sslmit is even worse
 819 than an high school [and
 820 Fed: [oh thank you
 821 Silvia: (.) that's what I said before
 822 Matteo: and (...) I think that the some
 823 professors (..) are too close
 824 with the students (..)
 825 Silvia: (ah ha) ((noise of possible
 826 agreement))
 827 Alan: could you explain what you
 828 mean by close?
 829 Matteo: close well er:::
 830 ((I look at her while she is talking to maria in background))
 831 Silvia: sorry ((in response to my look))
 832 Matteo: erm they: (7.0) ha ((laughing
 833 tone)) ((rosa snorts in a laughing
 834 manner)) (2.0) I'm just trying to
 835 (.) don't say the names ((small
 836 laugh)) but it's quite difficult
 837 Fed: no:=
 838 Silvia: =well maybe teachers talk about
 839 (.) things that are not (.) about

840 school with students (.) so: it's
 841 true what
 842 Matteo: yeah but I think there are several (.)
 843 projects here- [here in the Sslmit
 844 Fed: [I think
 845 you're referring to the fact that
 846 if you erm (.) do this extra
 847 curricular [activities
 848 Matteo: [yes
 849 Fed: like [theatre
 850 Matteo: [yes
 851 Fed: or stuff (get) in a really tight
 852 relationship=
 853 Matteo: =exactly
 854 Fed: with a professor cos it's even less
 855 people than in a classroom and
 856 you're not in a lesson so you're
 857 not just talking everybody's
 858 talking and doing stuff and it
 859 becomes more like a friendship
 860 than a a: professor student
 861 relationship [so: it's (less
 862 xxxxxxxx)
 863 Maria: [I think that still
 864 works (.) I think it can work as
 865 [long as you have a teacher
 866 Fed: [(xxx)
 867 ((Federico talking to rosa))
 868 Maria: as like an organiser
 869 Matteo: yes=
 870 Maria: =but if you have it inside a group
 871 ((federico sniggers)) (.)
 872 ((federico laughs)) it really gets
 873 difficult to create a normal

874 relationship like you you end up
875 either hating or (...)
876 Silvia: being friends
877 Maria: being friends
878 Fed: yeah but also it's not great for
879 those who see it
880 ((maria and silvia whisper to
881 each other in background))
882 Matteo: I know students that knew the
883 scores of some exams
884 ((maria and silvia talking slightly
885 more audibly to each other))
886 [before
887 Fed: [what?
888 Matteo: they [came up
889 Rosa: [the scores ((talking to
890 federico))
891 Matteo: on the: (.) baccheca ((italian for
892 notice board))
893 Maria: what? sorry
894 Matteo: I know that there are (.) students
895 who knew the: their the scores of
896 the exams before they came up
897 on the baccheca
898 ((maria and silvia whisper)) (..)
899 Alan: and is this friendship is this if I
900 understand correctly is this from
901 the theatre experiences they've
902 had or are you talking more
903 generally?
904 Silvia: well mostly the theatre [one
905 Matteo: [the theatre
906 Silvia: also the (programmes anyway) (.)
907 if [you go

908 Alan: [sorry (.) the programmes?
 909 Silvia: yeah like if you go to strasburgo
 910 Strasburg=
 911 Matteo: = ah ah ah ah ((matteo appears to
 912 have remembered this too and
 913 shows agreement))
 914 Silvia: with maggiorani and you get
 915 closer to him I don't know
 916 ((speaks with a laugh in her
 917 voice)) (.) I guess? But yeah
 918 mainly the the theatre but I think
 919 that (..) you (.) can just avoid it (.)
 920 Alan: hm
 921 Silvia: (it goes) like this (.) a:nd (.) when
 922 we are going to the theatre erm
 923 group and (.) meetings (.) you're
 924 actually doing something else
 925 you're not studying so you have
 926 to put other effort in it and (.)
 927 well there are bad sides and good
 928 sides so: oh I don't know I don't
 929 think it's gonna be condemned
 930 for that I don't know
 931 Matteo: yes but m: (.) I think that er:m
 932 (2.0) I think it's not normal that
 933 a student knows the score the
 934 scores of an exam
 935 Maria: that is not acceptable
 936 ((overlapping talk))
 937 I think it's not the students'
 938 fault (.) it's the professor's fault
 939 Fed: of course it is (.)
 940 ((general laughter))
 941 ((overlapping talk))

942 Alan: so this is not just one
 943 Silvia: (xx) typical
 944 Alan: this is not [just
 945 Matteo: [it's just
 946 one thing=
 947 Alan: =is it just one professor or a
 948 different professors? do you
 949 think
 950 Matteo: ahh [different
 951 ((overlapping talk))
 952 Silvia: ((talking to maria)) the (cores)?
 953 The (cores)? I don't know what
 954 he means
 955 Maria: the score
 956 Matteo: ah
 957 Alan: mark ((talking to maria))
 958 Matteo: [another thing erm
 959 Silvia: [ahh
 960 ok
 961 Alan: mark ((talking to maria))
 962 Matteo: other students knew that they
 963 had won the erasmus
 964 other students knew that they had
 965 won the erasmus scholarship (.)
 966 be:fore the: (.) the graduatoria
 967 Alan: right before the
 968 Matteo: yeah
 969 Alan: marks came out or the [list came
 970 out
 971 Silvia: [well I can
 972 tell you that there are some
 973 teachers th:at (.) who behave in a
 974 friendly way even if you don't do
 975 anything extra curricula (.) for

976 example there is one of my
 977 teachers (.) she was very kind to
 978 me even if I don't have anything
 979 to do with her so: (.) it depends
 980 on the wh- what you said yeah
 981 yes ok it's not right it's not fair
 982 that you know your score but
 983 that's the least I think there are
 984 maybe you can think when they
 985 higher your score because you
 986 know you: attend some extra
 987 classes or whatever (.) it can
 988 happen
 989 Alan: this er: idea of competitiveness
 990 that's been constant through out
 991 our talks both in individual and
 992 group (.) do you think that effects
 993 the idea of (.) the dynamics of
 994 competitiveness students feel (.)
 995 teachers are favouring them
 996 giving them=
 997 Silvia: =yeah
 998 Alan: unfair advantages?
 999 Fed: (I wish) ((whispered))
 1000 Alan: (.) sorry?
 1001 Fed: I wish ((laughs))
 1002 Alan: (ah he) wishes?
 1003 Fed: no I'm only joking but it would
 1004 be (.) [I'm I'm hopeful
 1005 professors are
 1006 [(silvia and maria whisper))
 1007 as (mad enough) to
 1008 understanding they are
 1009 professors and still if they

1010 (build that) ah a personal
 1011 relationship with a (if you build
 1012 even) a friendship with a
 1013 professor [then you hope in
 1014 yourself that you
 1015 [((silvia and maria
 1016 continue whispering))
 1017 You know you are doing it and
 1018 the professor is I don't know 40
 1019 50 years old he's mature
 1020 enough to separate the two
 1021 things then sometimes it
 1022 obviously doesn't happen but
 1023 that's not I think the problem
 1024 the problem is the professor not
 1025 managing to separate his er role
 1026 as a professor and as a person
 1027 not that I tend to build a
 1028 relationship that's not quite as
 1029 neg- [as negative as
 1030 Silvia: [well I think the fault is also
 1031 of the students the students' fault
 1032 [it's not only the teachers'
 1033 Fed: [if they if they look for it
 1034 Silvia: we're we're not [(.) 12 ((small
 1035 laugh))
 1036 Fed: [yes yes but
 1037 if you look for it [if you do it
 1038 Matteo: [(your 22)
 1039 He's (.) 50
 1040 Fed: exactly
 1041 Matteo: or [she's
 1042 Silvia: [yeah I know
 1043 but=

1044 Matteo: =60
 1045 Silvia: Ok but [you're
 1046 Matteo: [you're a professional
 1047 Silvia: you're you're kinda grown up ok
 1048 Matteo: yeah but he's older [or she's
 1049 Silvia: [yeah (she)
 1050 should make an effort
 1051 and (.) I (.) think (.) I'm (.)
 1052 wrong now because I couldn't
 1053 do it (.) so: i'm (making) my
 1054 own fault
 1055 Matteo: yeah yeah I think it's true but
 1056 (..) m: I think it's just the
 1057 professors' fault (.) I know that
 1058 you are (.) (grum-) that you're
 1059 grown up but (.) you: (.) the
 1060 professor
 1061 Silvia: yeah maybe he or she could
 1062 behave differently because
 1063 sometimes you just end up
 1064 doing things or behaving in a
 1065 way that you (.) wouldn't have
 1066 (.) done normally so: maybe yes
 1067 but still (.) you can behave in a
 1068 sort of way you you decide to
 1069 so (.) [it's=
 1070 Alan: [do
 1071 Silvia: =bilateral I think
 1072 Alan: everyone had experiences? I
 1073 mean can you give me an
 1074 episode or some experience
 1075 you've had where this has
 1076 happened this has occurred? Do
 1077 you think?

1078 Maria: i: don't I had no idea about the
 1079 advantages that people like
 1080 knowing the score the
 1081 mark before it came out I had no
 1082 idea about that but I do have a
 1083 problem with the teacher who
 1084 was doing theatre with us (.)
 1085 professor infanti cos she came
 1086 and she was an actress inside the
 1087 group like she wasn't (.) the
 1088 director or: she she didn't do
 1089 anything apart from acting (.) and
 1090 in that moment you have to
 1091 realise whether you want to be a
 1092 professor whose gracious-
 1093 graciously coming to our theatre
 1094 group I don't know to do
 1095 something with us or you're an
 1096 actress just like me
 1097 Alan: hm m
 1098 Maria: because if you are an actress i'm
 1099 I have to be able to tell you (.)
 1100 sorry you're not doing this
 1101 properly because nobody can
 1102 hear you or nobody can see the
 1103 other person behind you (.) and
 1104 you have to accept my critic
 1105 because (.) you're just as in my
 1106 level we are at the same level in
 1107 this moment (.) but if you if I
 1108 can't say that to you because I
 1109 feel that you will say oh it's not
 1110 true I'm not I'm not like (closing)
 1111 I'm not erm non sto bloccando

1112 nessuno ((Italian for I'm not
 1113 standing in front of anyone))
 1114 what am I supposed to think?
 1115 That you're behave- you're just
 1116 not a really actress (.) or you're a
 1117 professor and I can't tell you that
 1118 because I feel like you would
 1119 remember that and say oh she
 1120 told me that
 1121 Alan: ok I'm think more about the sort
 1122 of school though that's
 1123 understandable but I'm thinking
 1124 about any episodes or
 1125 experiences in the school where
 1126 you saw this or you [experienced
 1127 Silvia: [for example an experience
 1128 Sometimes I'm like (.) ok (.) did I
 1129 get that mark because I deserved
 1130 it? Or because I did something
 1131 outside (.) the school? The
 1132 university? Like theatre (.) for
 1133 instance
 1134 Alan: ah ha
 1135 Silvia: sometimes I doubt it (.) maybe she
 1136 gave me that mark because I
 1137 improved but sometimes I doubt
 1138 it so:
 1139 Alan: hm
 1140 Silvia: (.) there is that
 1141 Alan: right (3.0) rosa you're very quiet
 1142 do you have any experiences of
 1143 this or anything similar?
 1144 Rosa: hm (.) yeah for example
 1145 profressa infanti we also used to

1146 go play basket with (silvia) and
 1147 other students and actually we
 1148 really liked it I think like because
 1149 before coming here I used to go
 1150 to university faculty of er
 1151 economia di turismo and we were
 1152 about 400 students we did not
 1153 know the teachers the teachers
 1154 did not know us and I did not like
 1155 it at all because I think it was
 1156 really infor- it was really formal
 1157 and impersonal and I I didn't like
 1158 it but this year like that to be able
 1159 to create to be able to create a
 1160 relationship with the professor
 1161 and for the professor to know you
 1162 and even like to consider her as a
 1163 friend I really like that and I
 1164 don't know I mean nothing like
 1165 that happened like she would tell
 1166 us about (the) grade when you
 1167 would talk about school of grades
 1168 or (or this or with like silvia or)
 1169 with some other students playing
 1170 basket and just talking and (.) I
 1171 really love that (.) I think it was a
 1172 good thing so:
 1173 Alan: yeah (.) ok well let's talk about
 1174 something else perhaps (..) erm
 1175 (..) a lot of people talked about
 1176 passion (.) that one of the most
 1177 important things about languages
 1178 and learning languages and
 1179 becoming an interpreter is is

1180 passion and (.) I just want to
 1181 know about your passion what
 1182 sort of situation your passion is in
 1183 after your first year? Thinking
 1184 back to when you came in and
 1185 thinking now (...)
 1186 Silvia: Erm (.) posso ((Italian for may i?))
 1187 Alan: of course
 1188 Maria: please speak please speak ((very
 1189 low))
 1190 Silvia: erm well (.) for me (.) my passion
 1191 grew a lot because when I was
 1192 studying the language I (.) I
 1193 already liked (.) my passion grew
 1194 I was like oh my god I'm finding
 1195 out I'm finding out other things
 1196 (discovering other things) and I
 1197 like it more than I did before so:
 1198 (.) and well the other (side) is that
 1199 other languages that I chose
 1200 maybe it's ok maybe it's not the
 1201 language that I like so it depen- it
 1202 depends on the language (.) but
 1203 my passion is still there and it's
 1204 growing
 1205 Alan: is that passion to learn the
 1206 languages or to become an
 1207 interpreter?
 1208 Silvia: to learn the languages
 1209 Alan: ah
 1210 Silvia: not (making) an interpreter any
 1211 more
 1212 Alan: you've changed your mind
 1213 about it

1214 Silvia: yes

1215 Alan: or specifically you don't want to

1216 become a particular type of

1217 interpreter?

1218 Silvia: yeah or also not becoming an

1219 interpreter (.) I don't know I

1220 will wait to see in the future I'm

1221 confused ((small laugh))

1222 Alan: right (.) so your passion for

1223 languages remains though?

1224 Silvia: yeah I want to learn languages

1225 but I don't know how I will use

1226 them (.) so we'll see

1227 Alan: right ((silvia gives small laugh))

1228 and what about everybody else?

1229 (.) passion wise?

1230 Rosa: I really like mediation I really

1231 like mediating and like to: (.)

1232 pay attention of how to: behave

1233 also like to be able to mediate I

1234 really like that and I still have

1235 no idea what I want to do but I

1236 like that

1237 Alan: hm ok ((both laugh)) (5.0)

1238 Matteo: I think that my my passion is

1239 quite the same ((spoken in

1240 undynamic manner)) yeah [I'm

1241 Alan: [doesn't

1242 sound very enthusiastic (.) when you

1243 say that ((general laughter))

1244 Matteo: yeah m: well I I love foreign

1245 languages I: want to become to

1246 to:: become an interpreter (.)

1247 and I just know that it's m:

1248 more difficult than I imagined (.)
1249 before (.)
1250 Alan: why?
1251 Mick: (..) ah because erm (4.0) even
1252 though you: you think that you
1253 know a a foreign language for
1254 example the: the English
1255 language (..) when it when it
1256 comes to interpreting (..) it's
1257 complete different thing (.) a:nd I
1258 just can't can't speak at all (..)
1259 it's: (2.0) you need a (.) a: (..) a
1260 thorough knowledge of the
1261 language to manage the situation
1262 (2.0) that's it
1263 Alan: right (3.0) ((alan looks around
1264 group at each individual))
1265 Maria: passion keeps growing
1266 Alan: you're very enthusiastic [still
1267 aren't you
1268 Maria: [I am yeah
1269 Alan: yeah and nothing has
1270 dampened your spirits
1271 Maria: ah it does when I almost I didn't
1272 fail my Russian exam but I was
1273 really unhappy with myself (..) I
1274 wasn't enthus- enthusiastic but (.)
1275 I think I ask too much of myself
1276 (.) and now that I realise that I
1277 know that it's not that much of a
1278 big problem (.) I can do it again
1279 it's just an exam (.) it's not
1280 passion (.) so passion is growing

1281 I'm really happy in what I'm
1282 doing
1283 Alan: hm
1284 Maria: a:nd I look forward to start to
1285 work
1286 Alan: yeah
1287 Maria: so I still don't know if I will be
1288 like a (proper) interpreter I like
1289 (be in) tourism but who knows?
1290 Alan: hm m [erm
1291 Maria: [I'd like
1292 I'd like to invent a new job (.)
1293 for myself (.)
1294 Alan: hm (.) have you any idea what
1295 that might be?
1296 Maria: ah it might be like working for
1297 travel agency a:nd (.) er going
1298 around the world with a specific
1299 group of tourist who wants to
1300 have (first kind of life's)
1301 tourism and I can take them all
1302 around the world (.) not the
1303 world but like china and Russia
1304 and (.) anglo-saxon countries
1305 and explain them and make
1306 them talk with people and ask
1307 them what they really want to
1308 know (.) cos otherwise it's
1309 really difficult to do it
1310 Alan: did this come from yourself or
1311 did you have somebody suggest
1312 this?
1313 Maria: no: like from myself

1314 Alan: hm (.) interesting idea (..) when
 1315 you say you know the exam
 1316 didn't go very well and you
 1317 weren't happy about it you also
 1318 talked especially in our one to
 1319 one it's very important to have
 1320 help and support [here
 1321 Maria: [yes
 1322 Alan: in the university (.) not necessarily
 1323 your family is that something that
 1324 everybody else shares? (.) this idea
 1325 of help and support (..)
 1326 Fed: (never quite my cup so) ((very low
 1327 voice)) ((general laughter)) (.) no I
 1328 don't it's typically because
 1329 (xxxxxxx)
 1330 Alan: right so any bad experience here or
 1331 things (.) you're getting perhaps a
 1332 little bit depressed or whatever
 1333 what do you do to pick yourself up?
 1334 Fed: oh beer
 1335 Alan: beer? ((general laughter))
 1336 Rosa: ice cream ((laughs))
 1337 Alan: ice cream
 1338 Silvia: vodka
 1339 Alan: vodka?
 1340 Silvia: it's good
 1341 ((overlapping talk))
 1342 Silvia: and tv series (.) and (..)
 1343 anime ((laughs))
 1344 Alan: tv series and ?
 1345 Silvia: anime
 1346 ((overlapping talk))
 1347 Alan: are cartoons?

1348 Maria: (xx) japanese
 1349 Silvia: japanese [cartoons
 1350 Maria: [Japanese cartoons
 1351 Alan: japanese cartoons (.) right (.) ok
 1352 but any relations people who
 1353 help you and make you
 1354 Silvia: oh yes of course
 1355 ((general laughter and overlapping talk))
 1356 Alan: yeah (3.0)
 1357 ((laughter abates))
 1358 Silvia: yeah [friends
 1359 Maria: [friends
 1360 first by myself I have to be able
 1361 to pick up myself and then I talk
 1362 with friends then they pick me
 1363 up
 1364 Alan: hm m (4.0) right erm (.) t- t-
 1365 coming towards the end I don't
 1366 want to keep it too long but erm
 1367 (.) in your experience over the
 1368 year have (.) have you sort of (.)
 1369 what positive and negative
 1370 experiences have you had in the
 1371 classroom with (.) teachers
 1372 anything that's sort of (.) made
 1373 you change in a particular way
 1374 or in quite a strong way your
 1375 view about your future careers
 1376 or or your future is there any
 1377 experience like that? (2.0)
 1378 Fed: well I don't want to become a
 1379 teacher (you know)
 1380 Alan: you don't want to become a
 1381 teacher?

1382 Fed: no? ((silvia laughs))
 1383 Alan: why? (2.0)
 1384 Fed: not talking personally but they all
 1385 kind of look (.) exhausting erm un-
 1386 nerved and (.) on the verge of (.)
 1387 starting to throw objects (.) IT
 1388 DOESN'T look like a very
 1389 enjoyable (.) job (.) career
 1390 Alan: is that everybody's experience?
 1391 ((silvia laughs))
 1392 Fed: you you don't look like that I mean
 1393 you're tanned and ((alan and silvia
 1394 laugh)) (.) but there's a lot of
 1395 professors who you go and talk with
 1396 them and start a conversation
 1397 and quiet and then they start
 1398 getting this (..)
 1399 Rosa: (aggressive)
 1400 Fed: frustration and oh COME ON it's a
 1401 job and just relax and do it
 1402 Alan: Roxanne what did you say?
 1403 Rosa: aggressive I said
 1404 Alan: so you have a similar
 1405 ((overlapping talk))
 1406 Maria: (x) no no no obviously
 1407 Alan: Oh you haven't had [this experience
 1408 Maria: [no no I've never
 1409 heard this
 1410 Alan: is it is it just federico who's had this
 1411 experience? (.) what do you think of
 1412 your teacher then?
 1413 ((overlapping talk))
 1414 Maria: erm: (...) sorry no it's just (.) some (.)
 1415 er kind of professor they really are

1416 going crazy and you you can see that
 1417 they have [NOTHING] apart from
 1418 university
 1419 Fed: [(xx) yes yes
 1420 Maria: and just like (.) get a life (..)
 1421 Silvia: (important) one case
 1422 Maria: I don't know I know one case
 1423 Silvia: yeah more than one
 1424 Alan: can can you give me an example?
 1425 ((general laughter))
 1426 Silvia: no (.) [I won't ((humorous tone))
 1427 Maria: [one of them
 1428 were Russian teacher
 1429 Fed: (dumchev) ((other voices pronounce
 1430 name))
 1431 Alan: you don't have to talk this
 1432 (.) [teacher just the experience
 1433 Fed: [(xxx)
 1434 Maria: no she's she's like crazy she was
 1435 writing emails as like 2 am saying o:k
 1436 I checked your exam they're good and
 1437 see you again tomorrow and take
 1438 prepare your oral exam I don't know
 1439 but (.) [2 am
 1440 Fed: [(xxx)
 1441 I don't know she's (not the [worse
 1442 case)
 1443 Maria: [no
 1444 she's far [out
 1445 Fed: [oh she's
 1446 just boring (.) it's not her fault come on
 1447 Alan: she's [what? boring?
 1448 Maria: [she is=
 1449 Fed: =boring

1450 Maria: she is boring (.) but no she's just like
 1451 you can see that she doesn't have (...)
 1452 I don't want to be mean ((laughs,
 1453 others laugh)) she doesn't have=
 1454 Fed: =friends
 1455 Maria: friends ((federico laughs))
 1456 Silvia: (life)
 1457 Maria: a life
 1458 Silvia: like (.) get a life
 1459 Maria: no but (.) she doesn't know like she
 1460 doesn't it seems like she doesn't have
 1461 time to take care of herself (.) she comes
 1462 ((federico laughs)) like her hair is worse
 1463 than mine and (.) she really looks like
 1464 really tired and she's always like quite
 1465 grumpy?
 1466 Alan: hm
 1467 Maria: (.) so just (.) ok I mean I know that
 1468 this is important it's your job but
 1469 really this is your job you're not living
 1470 (.) to do a job to have a job you're
 1471 doing a job so you can live in a
 1472 better way
 1473 Alan: hm m
 1474 Maria: just (.) take it easy
 1475 Alan: so you agree with federico about this
 1476 obsession [with the university
 1477 Maria: [not with all
 1478 the professor I met but (.) a couple at
 1479 least (.)
 1480 Alan: is that everybody's experience?
 1481 Silvia: a couple at least
 1482 Alan: hm: (3.0)
 1483 Matteo: nothing particular (2.0)

1484 Alan: what are your impressions of the
 1485 teachers in general then do you
 1486 have a general impression or
 1487 everybody's different?
 1488 Matteo: everybody's different (.) yeah
 1489 ((voice fading)) (...) (that's it) (.)
 1490 nothing special (.)
 1491 Alan: ok erm (..) just before we finish
 1492 then (.) coming
 1493 towards the end erm (..) about
 1494 the future (4.0)
 1495 Fed: hm: [(xx)
 1496 Silvia: [(xx) ((inaudible low voice))
 1497 Alan: this is the end of your first year
 1498 moving on now you'll be going
 1499 some of you will be going to
 1500 erasmus (.) some of you will be
 1501 coming back er (.) generally
 1502 speaking wh- what sort of ideas
 1503 do you have about your future
 1504 now? (.) erm I think you talked
 1505 about destiny and fate silvia in
 1506 our one to one you [said
 1507 Silvia: [well
 1508 Alan: I just I just surrender to
 1509 DESTINY ((general laughter))
 1510 Silvia: I did yes yeah
 1511 Alan: yeah (.) so
 1512 Silvia: I don't remember
 1513 Alan: so?
 1514 Silvia: yeah I don't think about the
 1515 future very much I want to live
 1516 now so:
 1517 Alan: hm

1518 Silvia: what will be will be ((small
 1519 laugh))
 1520 Alan: yes [this is
 1521 Rosa: [I'm the same
 1522 Alan: you're the same?
 1523 Silvia: exactly exactly=
 1524 Rosa: I'm enjoying learning languages
 1525 and I like to travel a lot so like go
 1526 to the countries I'm learning the
 1527 language and improve them and I
 1528 like what I'm doing (but) I have no
 1529 idea about the future ((federico
 1530 laughs))
 1531 Silvia: [well well I don't rush towards
 1532 Rosa: [(xxxx)
 1533 Alan: but I don't think some people are
 1534 of the same opinion maria you you
 1535 don't have this (..) opinion do you?
 1536 Maria: erm I am looking forward for
 1537 what's coming but I am really
 1538 enjoying the present so: (..) I am
 1539 being careful not to waste (.) my
 1540 time now
 1541 Alan: so you don't have any plans for the
 1542 future
 1543 Maria: I have some I have [plenty
 1544 Fed: [you already
 1545 told us (one)
 1546 Maria: yeah I have ((federico laughs))
 1547 plenty
 1548 Alan: hm m
 1549 Maria: I just which is more and which is
 1550 (.) best one
 1551 Alan: hm

1552 Maria: or the right one
 1553 Alan: right (.)
 1554 Maria: yeah
 1555 Alan: is it destiny and fate as silvia said
 1556 ((silvia laughs))
 1557 Maria: I'm I I don't like the word fate
 1558 nor [destiny
 1559 Silvia: [me neither
 1560 Maria: I always said it's sort of an
 1561 excuse to say OH (.) su- sugar
 1562 happens ((sugar instead of shit
 1563 perhaps)) erm you know it's
 1564 destiny (.) it's not it's bad things
 1565 happen I do agree with karma but
 1566 (.) destiny's a sort of explanation
 1567 you want to use if you're not (.) if
 1568 you're failing yourself so (.) I
 1569 don't believe in destiny
 1570 Alan: right
 1571 Maria: I decide what I want to do (.)
 1572 Silvia: (I agree) ((whispered)) ((small
 1573 laugh))
 1574 Alan: Michele?
 1575 Matteo: I just can't wait to go on
 1576 erasmus ((general laughter))
 1577 (..) well hm::
 1578 Alan: what's happened Michele?
 1579 you've changed a lot since we
 1580 began this [session
 1581 Matteo: [no no no
 1582 I'm: (.) I'm just tired of forli
 1583 ((loud general laughter))
 1584 erm well erm the: another flat
 1585 mate she's erm I think she will

1586 graduate this summer well erm
 1587 well she went in England and
 1588 Russia she said that (..) m: once
 1589 you go in a foreign country for an
 1590 experience like the erasmus one
 1591 (..) or the overseas one or another
 1592 exchange well erm your mind
 1593 changes (..) and you enjoy the
 1594 Sslmit in a different way (..) a:nd
 1595 (..) I just can't wait
 1596 Alan: hm
 1597 Matteo: because er
 1598 Fed: cos you're obviously enjoying it
 1599 a lot ((general laughter))
 1600 Matteo: yeah
 1601 Alan: is it when you said forli did you
 1602 mean the city in general? or:=
 1603 Matteo: =the city in general
 1604 Alan: does that influence you all the the
 1605 place you study?
 1606 ((a chorus of 'yeah')) forli (...)
 1607 rosa
 1608 Rosa: yeah I'm not now it's not that bad
 1609 but
 1610 Fed: (cos you're) studying (Chinese)
 1611 ((general laughter))
 1612 Silvia: shut up you're from bologna
 1613 Fed: yeah
 1614 ((silvia makes gesture which
 1615 appears to want to excuse herself
 1616 for the out burst))
 1617 Alan: no problem
 1618 Maria: so from april we was born again
 1619 Rosa: yeah

1620 Maria: there started a lot of things (.)
 1621 before there was nothing
 1622 Rosa: there was nothing
 1623 Silvia: because forli had 2 sides in spring
 1624 it changes (.) I've been here for 2
 1625 years so I already (do it) so (.)
 1626 like ok (.) calm down you will
 1627 see ((small laugh)) (.)
 1628 Alan: are you're talking about the
 1629 weather?
 1630 Maria: no [(xx)
 1631 Silvia: [not only
 1632 not only (.) the second term is
 1633 completely different the way (.)
 1634 you behave (.) the way you see
 1635 what you're doing (.) well the
 1636 weather kind of helps ((small
 1637 laugh))
 1638 Alan: yeah
 1639 Silvia: but well (.) when it's sunny all
 1640 RIGHT (.) when you can get to
 1641 the park (.) sunbathe I mean (that
 1642 way) cos for example we don't
 1643 have many parks where I live in
 1644 abruzzo so here it's a bit (.) a new
 1645 thing
 1646 Alan: hm m
 1647 Silvia: and the spirit it changes
 1648 completely
 1649 Alan: the spirit of?
 1650 Silvia: yeah summer is coming (.) m:
 1651 you know spring for all animals
 1652 and ((general laughter)) we are

1653 (social) animals so: (.) different
 1654 ((small laugh))
 1655 Alan: hm right interesting (.)
 1656 Silvia: you are interpreters (.) interpret
 1657 ((general laughter))
 1658 Alan: well the city itself does it erm (.)
 1659 apart from the weather (.) what
 1660 aspects of the city=
 1661 Rosa: =for example on Mondays when
 1662 you're thinking about the
 1663 weekends and in winter there was
 1664 nothing so I was like=
 1665 Alan: =on Monday or Friday?
 1666 Rosa: on Monday like on the first day
 1667 that you start the week and you're
 1668 going to the university so you
 1669 thinking ok so on the weekend
 1670 it's gonna become like I'm gonna
 1671 have 2 days off like in the
 1672 weekends but then I'm thinking
 1673 what I'm gonna do in forli there's
 1674 nothing to do ((federico laughs))
 1675 like last 2 years ago when I was
 1676 in rimini ((costal town)) I was
 1677 like always looking forward for
 1678 the weekends because we always
 1679 had some big plan like going out
 1680 being out like until the sunrise I
 1681 mean it was like amazing thing
 1682 every week is like something but
 1683 here nothing ((federico laughs))
 1684 ((general laughter))
 1685 Maria: like now there's a little bit more
 1686 ((overlapping talk))

1687 Alan: yeah but now now there's a bit
 1688 more?
 1689 Maria: yeah on Wednesdays everything
 1690 is open a:nd=
 1691 Silvia: there's music
 1692 Maria: there's music (.) and and
 1693 anyway even the other days (.)
 1694 there's people going around
 1695 ((federico snorts laugh))
 1696 Rosa: yeah
 1697 Silvia: concerts (.) lots of lots of stuff
 1698 Alan: because you guys study a lot
 1699 languages are very difficult so
 1700 you have to study a lot I
 1701 suppose it's even more
 1702 important perhaps to be able to
 1703 relax ((chorus of yeah)) (..)
 1704 WELL in a good way ((small
 1705 laugh)) so the city effects in that
 1706 way perhaps? (.) yeah
 1707 Maria: (.) I don't care like (.) I prefer it
 1708 to be a little bit more calmer
 1709 during the winter because I
 1710 knew if I were back in turin I'd
 1711 be going out every night and so
 1712 it does have 2 sides (xx) (..)
 1713 Silvia: well I think if I er will have
 1714 gone to bologna I would have
 1715 studied more
 1716 Maria: no way
 1717 Silvia: yes
 1718 Maria: no way:
 1719 Silvia: for sure
 1720 Alan: why?

1721 Silvia: because when you have lots of
 1722 stuff to do (.) maybe you can
 1723 organise your time better and
 1724 here I waste I wasted I've been
 1725 wasting and I'm still wasting all
 1726 the time doing (.) nothing (.)
 1727 because I'm like that [it's just my
 1728 character
 1729 Maria: [(xxx)
 1730 Silvia: (.) sorry what?
 1731 Maria: watching tv?
 1732 Silvia: no I don't watch tv but watching
 1733 [shows on my er yeah exactly
 1734 Maria: [(tv series xxxx)
 1735 Silvia: so you: (.) maybe you become a
 1736 little more a little nerdier
 1737 ((general low laughter))
 1738 Alan: nerd as in nerd nerdy nerdier
 1739 Silvia: but I think in bologna I don't
 1740 know like go out during the
 1741 weekends (.) and study ((maria
 1742 makes sound of suppressed
 1743 laughter)) what do you want?
 1744 Fed: why only the weekend? [there's 7
 1745 days a week
 1746 Silvia: [not only the
 1747 weekend but I mean OK I will
 1748 go out don't know when and er I
 1749 will study for the rest of the time
 1750 because there are lots of libraries
 1751 and stuff and there is one [library
 1752 and
 1753 Maria: [oh:

1754 Silvia: what (do you want?) (.) it's my
 1755 character I know myself all right?
 1756 ((small laugh))
 1757 Maria: oh: all right
 1758 Silvia: sorry (.) you don't I do ok (.) so:
 1759 that's good (.) sorry ((to alan))
 1760 Alan: so in bologna you'd be able to
 1761 study more because you:
 1762 Silvia: because I will have more fun I
 1763 will have my life more organised
 1764 Alan: right
 1765 Silvia: so now I study and then I go out
 1766 (.) here it's now what do I do?
 1767 ((small laugh)) so: [(wasting time)
 1768 Fed: [(xxx
 1769 Silvia: on the computer (.) and it's my
 1770 character everyone is different so:
 1771 [I'm just saying
 1772 Fed: [(I know anyway) you
 1773 have time to study later cos you don't have
 1774 anything to do=
 1775 Silvia: =exactly exactly ALWAYS study
 1776 later I have plenty of time
 1777 bologna is different ok I have to
 1778 go out ok for because I don't
 1779 have the strength to to: (resist) for
 1780 2 hours on the books no: just 20
 1781 minutes and then ok you have to
 1782 have a break and then 20 minutes
 1783 ok break ((laughs)) I'm like this
 1784 so: ok 40 minutes then go out
 1785 then come home and then study
 1786 maybe it would be different I
 1787 think this way

1788 Alan: right (.) is that everybody's
1789 experience are you able to
1790 manage your studies properly in
1791 that way? or
1792 Matteo: I can't manage my time ((general
1793 low laughter)) (I just can't
1794 manage any time)
1795 Silvia: I can't manage my room (.) so:
1796 ((laughs followed by general
1797 laughter))
1798 Alan: well some teachers have some
1799 courses have very strict rules
1800 about what you have to prepare
1801 the lesson does that help? when
1802 they say you [know tomorrow
1803 Silvia: [yes
1804 Alan: you have to have=
1805 Silvia: =yeah
1806 Alan: prepared
1807 Silvia: I still ((laughs)) er
1808 Fed: don't ((laughs))
1809 Silvia: yeah I still don't bring them (..) but I do
1810 in time (.) a little bit late but I do
1811 it at least so and not always late
1812 ok? so yes it does
1813 Alan: ah do you prefer that do you
1814 prefer strict [stricter
1815 Silvia: [yeah
1816 Alan: teachers that are more: (.) give
1817 and take and more [relaxed
1818 perhaps
1819 Silvia: [I am too
1820 laid back then otherwise
1821 Alan: what about everybody=

1822 Maria: =I prefer strict teacher but i: (..) I
 1823 like it more if she: like she said
 1824 ok this is the scheduled time you
 1825 have to do it (..) by this day (..)
 1826 but you organise yourself I'm not
 1827 gonna ask every single day how
 1828 are you doing and have you done
 1829 it have you done it yet? (..) oh my
 1830 god
 1831 Alan: so good deadlines [clear
 1832 deadlines
 1833 Maria: [I'm not in high
 1834 school
 1835 Alan: (..) are you? ((federico gives small
 1836 laugh))
 1837 Maria: i: hope not
 1838 Alan: right (..) ok (..) what about you
 1839 matteo?
 1840 Matteo: (2.0) I prefer strict professors (..)
 1841 yes (..) because erm ((alan notices
 1842 silvia making signs that they are
 1843 hot and nods at her to open the
 1844 window)) they just help me
 1845 manage my time and that's it
 1846 Alan:right which which subjects
 1847 do you have strict professors in?
 1848 Matteo: e::rm (4.0) er just in general (..)
 1849 there is not a subject in particular
 1850 Alan: some are [stricter
 1851 Matteo: [but
 1852 it's just er I'm too laid back
 1853 Alan: right (..) so you need
 1854 Matteo: yeah ((small laugh))
 1855 Alan: something

1856 Matteo: I need strict rules
1857 Alan: strict rules (.) ok Rosa?
1858 Rosa: yeah me too because if they don't
1859 say yeah it's obligatory I don't do
1860 it so ((laughs)) I know it's not
1861 good
1862 Alan: is that general is that
1863 ((nods of confirmation and some
1864 yeah responses from the group))
1865 unless the teacher says you need
1866 to do this have to do this
1867 Maria: it depends on the language=
1868 Fed: =yeah exactly=
1869 Silvia: =and on the people
1870 Alan: language
1871 Fed: and on the teacher
1872 Rosa: for example the translation the
1873 active translation we didn't have
1874 to do it so: I never did (the
1875 homework) and so like for the
1876 exam I was just always I was
1877 saying oh why didn't I just do it
1878 ((general laughter)) I had so
1879 much time but
1880 Silvia: [or (x)
1881 Rosa: [(xx)
1882 Silvia: sorry go on
1883 Rosa: so for the passive we had to so: I
1884 did translation so:
1885 Alan: right (.) it's interesting mix there
1886 because between being strict and
1887 being sort of you know (.) you're
1888 mature students you know how to
1889 study ((small general laughter))

1890 Silvia: (for sure)

1891 Fed: (..) I like having a strict professor

1892 cos you have to do your stuff (.)

1893 but sure- it's not the (.) the best

1894 it's (rather the best) to learn the

1895 language but not to become a a

1896 worker

1897 Alan: a worker?

1898 Fed: yes to approach and to prepare

1899 myself for a job

1900 Alan: hm

1901 Fed: one day hopefully (.) have one (.)

1902 er but erm because it's probably

1903 the best approach to it ((silvia and

1904 Marta whisper in background))

1905 you have to do it and you are

1906 going to do it and that's it but it's

1907 the responsibility is no longer on

1908 you

1909 Alan: hm m

1910 Fed: you have the professor telling

1911 you do this this and that (.) no not

1912 that sentence (.) the other (.) yes

1913 that and that and that (.) stop (.)

1914 you do that and you're (not)

1915 going to worry about what to

1916 prepare and what to think about (.)

1917 in a in a working situation will

1918 never be like that (.) you won't

1919 have a study page 4 and 5 and

1920 then do this and that (and then a)

1921 a list and a schedule precise (.)

1922 you have to do it yourself so it's

1923 great for learning but not so great

1924 for (..) learning to become a
 1925 natural (auditor)
 1926 Alan: a natural what?
 1927 Fed: adu- adu- adulto
 1928 Maria: adult=
 1929 Alan: adult
 1930 Fed: adult thank you sorry ((silvia
 1931 gives low laugh))
 1932 Alan: whose going here on erasmus
 1933 here by the way?
 1934 ((overlapping talk)) ((show of
 1935 hands))
 1936 Maria: I didn't ask
 1937 Alan: why didn't you ask to go on
 1938 erasmus?
 1939 Maria: because I'm waiting for Russian
 1940 for Russia and (.) I have been
 1941 abroad last year so I talk a lot of
 1942 english and I prefer being here
 1943 that's (.) next year
 1944 Alan: oh (.) different from Michele who
 1945 can't wait to escape
 1946 Fed: (xxxxxxx)
 1947 Alan: and why aren't you going on
 1948 erasmus
 1949 Rosa: I'm on overseas here ((general
 1950 laughter))
 1951 Alan: ah: of course (.) so you're you're
 1952 stuck here ((Roxanne laughs))
 1953 great (.) and silvia where are you
 1954 going?
 1955 Silvia: france
 1956 Alan: france (..) looking forward to it?

1957 Silvia: (3.0) ((federico makes
 1958 celebratory sound)) YES hm well
 1959 it's not the (.) the place I would
 1960 like to to go but ok yeah it's
 1961 erasmus so: (.) the thing is many
 1962 people told me about it in a (.)
 1963 bitter way so: I hope I enjoy it
 1964 anyway
 1965 Alan: why why bitter?
 1966 Silvia: because they didn't like it I met
 1967 just 2 people who talked about it
 1968 in a good way so: (.) a:nd the
 1969 preparation the bureaucracy (.)
 1970 behind the erasmus programme
 1971 it's so:: ((exhales)) (.) stressing I
 1972 think and so well I will be able to
 1973 enjoy it only when I will be there
 1974 I think (..) but now I can't say I
 1975 can't wait (...) I can wait
 1976 ((laughs)) we we will see I don't
 1977 know
 1978 Alan: good or bad things to do with the
 1979 bureaucracy only or the actual
 1980 institution or the atmosphere?
 1981 Silvia: no the thing is that I don't study
 1982 French so I'm doing a (...) weird
 1983 thing for SSLMIT (..) apparently
 1984 (.) from what they told me (.)
 1985 we're just doing this year going
 1986 out in a place in a country we
 1987 don't tha- that we don't study that
 1988 language so: erm you know (.)
 1989 teachers are a bit (.) tough and
 1990 they say (.) why are you doing

1991		this? (.) you're already you're
1992		already (plenty) doubts doubts
1993		and when well the teachers don't
1994		have at all so: (.) I don't know
1995		we'll see (...)
1996	Alan:	we'll see indeed (.) well
1997		everybody thank you very much
1998		for your time I think

APPENDIX B

FIELD NOTES

Date: 8/10/2012

Time: 15.45

Place: Classroom: First Presentation of research

Situated on the 3rd floor of a building opposite the main entrance to Sslmit (known to students and teachers alike as via Oberdan, or palazzo Becchi), the classroom was one of the smallest in the institution and was quite tightly packed with students. It was hot and some students looked visibly uncomfortable, fanning themselves with pieces of paper. I opened a window to let some fresh air in.

When I announced that I had something important to communicate there was a puzzled look on some of the students' faces, perhaps because they thought it was something to do with official university business. The room fell quickly silent. I explained that I intended to carry out some post-graduate research relevant to those students who were expressly convinced, even at this early stage in their academic careers, that they wanted to become professional interpreters. I told all those students that might have such convictions, that this research aimed to investigate their changing views towards their studies over the period of their first year, in order to make proposals for potential changes in the department's curricula to improve the teaching syllabus for future students. I also told them that I was carrying out this research as a post-graduate at Kings College, part of the University of London. A few students seemed to be impressed when I mentioned my institution's name.

I then described how the research project was designed, requiring volunteer participants to be interviewed twice individually (for approximately one hour), at the end of their first and second terms, about their experiences in the institution, and twice all together in 'workshops' (group interviews) which would last around two hours at the end of each one-to-one interview session. I informed them that all

interview dates would be decided based on their own availability and not imposed by me.

I then explained that I had information sheets and consent forms that I would distribute to all those students who might be interested, explaining the nature of the research again in print, together with information about how volunteers would be treated according to research ethics (guaranteed anonymity and the right to pull out of the research whenever they wanted, with none of their data being used without their consent). I asked those students who might be interested in participating to raise their hands and I would give them the sheets to read (and, regarding the consent form, sign and date at a later date) if they were interested. I then told the students that were interested to place their consent forms in my departmental pigeonhole within 2 days. I wrote my e-mail on the white board telling the class that they could contact me through that if they had any further questions or wanted simply to confirm that they wanted to participate. I further explained that I would hold one hour, recorded interviews with all those students who were interested, and would choose only five at the end, as group work would be logistically impossible with more than that.

When I had finished I asked the students if they had any questions. One put his hand up and asked if his participation would influence his final mark for the year. At that point I explained to the class that my research had nothing to do with student courses and was my own private research, which had been authorised by the institution but which had nothing to do with their studies. Some students looked disappointed at this and, I suspected, had lost interest in my proposal immediately.

When I had handed out the information sheets and consent forms to those students who put their hands up (15 in a class of approximately 35), I told everyone that I would hang around at the end if they wanted to ask me any individual questions in private. Then I dismissed the class and sat down at the teacher's table at the head of the classroom.

Date: 8/10/2012

Time: 16.10

Place: Classroom: Talking to students after presentation

As the students filed out, two stopped to tell me that they definitely wanted to be part of the research and asked if they could hand in the research consent form immediately. I said that they could of course and that they should write me an e-mail so that I could contact them for the first interview. These students (Maria and Silvia) would later become part of my research cohort. They appeared to be very excited at the prospect of being part of the research and I surmised that they might be friends who wanted to work together. Another student, who had been waiting behind them, asked me if the research definitely had nothing to do with her official academic studies, as she didn't want to participate. She appeared a little worried as though it might be a 'bad mark' against her academic career. I assured her that this was nothing to do with her studies and that she could tell everyone she knew that I only wanted students who wanted to participate and that I wouldn't be offended in the least if students didn't want to be in the research, particularly as I was sure that not all the students wanted to be professional interpreters. She smiled and left the room. Another student approached me, shyly at first, and asked if the research project was only for Italian students as she was interested but she was Iranian. I said that nationality was not a problem and that she could apply if she wanted to. She thanked me and left. [This student, Rosa, was later selected to be part of the research as well).

Date: 10/10/2012

Time: 10.45

Place: Classroom: Presentation of research

The presentation of the research to the second class appeared to be received in much the same way as the first. It took place in a much larger classroom on the ground floor of the main building (known as Palazzo Montanari), looking onto an internal courtyard in the institution. There was a sudden silence and a puzzled look from some students again when I made the first announcement, that I had

something important to say. However, there were a few students who were talking quickly (in the manner of asides) to other students near them. I thought that they might have already heard about my research from the other class and were potentially informing others that they knew what I was about to say. When I had explained the research as before I told the students that I would wait behind if they had any questions.

Date: 10/10/2012

Time: 11.05

Place: Classroom: Talking to students after presentation

As the class was filing out, students were picking up their bags which they had left in the corner, just inside the door, and causing a small queue to form. Three male students were talking animatedly close to my desk and then one approached me, asking if he and his friends might give in their consent forms, as they were very interested in participating together. I thanked them for wanting to be part of it, but told them that I couldn't guarantee that they all could be in the research, as the final number I wanted to work with was only five. They handed me their consent forms and I asked them to contact me via my e-mail to set up the initial interviews. [Subsequent to this encounter I saw the same students around the institution and in the streets nearby, and they would always stop talking and smile at me, often one saying 'buongiorno professore', apparently as a sign of respect. Most students would just smile and nod at me when they saw me, so I didn't know if this was some way of ingratiating themselves with me to get on the research project or not].

Date: 15/10/2012

Time: 9.05

Place: Talking to Federico in at the local café.

There is a café on the same road as the main building of the institution (Palazzo Montanari) called 'café Forli'. Outside there is an extensive area of wooden decking with around 10 tables, where many students would congregate in the

morning to have coffee and chat before their lessons began. While I was having a cappuccino on my own, a student approached me. He asked if he could talk to me and I said yes of course. He told me that he had handed in a consent form but that he had changed his mind, as on reflection he didn't think he was suitable for the research as he was quite timid and didn't like talking in front of people. I asked him his name and told me it was Federico Campofiori (I use a pseudonym here). I told him that it was no problem, that I understood his reason, and that I wouldn't contact him for the research. He looked relieved, thanked me and went away.

Date: 16/10/2012

Time: 15.20

Place: Talking to Matteo in corridor

As I was coming out of the teacher's room on the second floor of Palazzo Montanari (the main building) a student stopped me in the corridor and asked if it was too late to hand in his consent form. I told him that it was still fine to do so and asked him his name, Matteo he said. Matteo looked a little older than the other students, perhaps in his mid to late 20s. I asked him why he had seemingly hesitated to do the research and he explained that he had had to go to Rome as he was moving from there to Forli. We talked about Rome and I said that it was a wonderful city and must be quite a contrast coming to live in such a small town like Forli. Matteo laughed and said that he would miss it but that this was his second degree and he was very excited at having got in to Sslmit and loved his studies already. I said I would contact him soon if he would drop me an e-mail and took his consent form, which he had signed and dated.

Date: 17/10/2012

Time: 14.00

Place: Another encounter with Federico at the local café.

As I was drinking a glass of red wine at café Forli on a sunny Monday afternoon, Federico approached me again. He appeared to be a little embarrassed and uncomfortable. I invited him to sit down and asked him what he wanted to talk

about. He explained that he had talked to his friend and that she had convinced him to try and be part of the research as she had also applied and wanted to work with him. Federico asked me if he could possibly be considered again. I said yes of course but only if he truly wanted to. He appeared to hesitate for a second, gave a little laugh, and said yes and that he was sorry for confusing me so much. I said it wasn't a problem and that I would contact him soon for the initial interviews.

Date: 3/12/2012

Time: 11.00

Place: Classroom, First interview with Maria

This first interview took place in a small classroom in via Oberdan on the second floor (as did most of the other interviews I conducted), and was my first planned interview (the time and place of the other interviews had been agreed via e-mail with the other students). I was particularly worried that everything would work, particularly the ipad I was using to record with. Before Maria arrived I tested the device a few times by recording my speech and playing it back, it seemed to work fine.

When Maria arrived I think I was more nervous than her, as this was the first day of my PhD research, something I knew I would be spending the next 4-5 years of my life on. I began by describing how I wanted to conduct the interview by firstly getting her to think about her life as though it were a book and jotting down the title of the chapters she would put in that book, to represent the significant phases in her life. I told her that I would leave her think about that for a few minutes and I left the classroom to go and get a coffee. When I returned, I turned on the recording and began by asking her to describe her book, which she did. For each of the titles she had given for the chapters I asked for more information and clarification as to why she had identified them as being significant to her. Initially I imagined that most of the talk would be about her more remote past life, but I was surprised that she began to talk quite quickly about her recent experiences in the institution, and what emerged were fragmentary tales about life there. At this point I began to question my whole premise that this part of the research would elicit a 'big story'; a rounded, well-formed narrative that could be analysed under

that paradigm. A little panic set in, and I found myself re-thinking my theoretical approach to my research as Maria spoke. However, I stopped myself from continuing like this quite quickly, as I was sure I would miss important things in the interview if I allowed myself to be distracted. I decided not to return to the subject of Maria's 'book' if she did not, and allow her to talk about whatever she wanted to with a minimal of interruption. When the interview was concluded however and Maria had left, I sat for a while thinking about the type of data I had to analyse and how it appeared to be much more relevant to a 'small story' approach; small, fragmentary and often incomplete narratives that emerge in conversation.

Considering Maria as a possible candidate for the research project, I thought that she would be highly suitable, as she was evidently passionate about her studies in the institution and her goal to become a professional interpreter, as well as being very talkative (an important factor from the point of view of the group interview).

Date: 3/12/2012

Time: 14.30

Place: Classroom, First interview with Stefano

I carried out the same initial interview procedure with Stefano (and all the other candidates), referring to the 'book' metaphor again and asking him to write down his 'chapter titles' as I left the room for a few minutes. However, when I began interviewing him his responses were extremely short and my follow up questions got even less response. He appeared to treat the interview as an interrogation, only answering my direct questions and not elaborating or developing any of his comments. I rapidly came to the conclusion that Stefano would not be a meaningful contributor to the research 10 minutes into the interview, and concluded it shortly afterwards.

Date: 3/12/2012

Time: 11.00

Place: Classroom, First interview with Giuseppe

Giuseppe appeared to be a friend of Stefano, as when I arrived to carry out the interview with him he was standing outside the door chatting to Stefano. The interview was surprisingly similar to the one with Stefano the day before. He was not very communicative and appeared to be extremely nervous, treating the interview as an oral examination on his English as he was continually apologising for his mistakes in the language and pausing to re-phrase what he said. This made the interview very repetitive and I became increasingly frustrated (which I tried to hide from him). Needless to say I concluded quite quickly that Giuseppe would not be a suitable candidate. This episode also sensitised me to how some students were positioning me as an 'English teacher', regardless of the different role I was attempting to position myself as, 'a researcher'.

Date: 4/12/2012

Time: 14.30

Place: Classroom, First interview with Federico

Federico arrived with Silvia (the student I planned to interview after him). I assumed that they must be friends (or even possibly girlfriend and boyfriend). Remembering my conversation with Federico at café Forlì on the 17/10 (see above, p.705), where he told me that a friend had convinced him to try to be selected for the research, I imagined that Silvia must be this person. Federico was very talkative, unlike Stefano and Giuseppe before him, but he had an agitated manner of speech, commenting on his own thoughts and ideas as he expressed them, and speaking very quickly and in a low tone sometimes, which worried me when I thought about how I would write a transcript of the interview (something that kept coming into my mind in the interview). However, I found his experiences in his previous institution very interesting as he had done 2 years in med school but had decided to drop out to apply to Sslmit and become an interpreter. The choice to abandon the natural sciences and an evident passion for foreign languages made him an interesting subject I thought for the research

programme. By the end of the interview in fact I was sure that he might be a very viable candidate.

Date: 4/12/2012

Time: 17.00

Place: Classroom, First interview with Silvia

Federico came with Silvia for her own interview, and it seemed to me that they were both encouraging each other to be part of the research. Silvia was the most enthusiastic about getting into Sslmit, of all the people I had interviewed till then. She had already tried once and failed and this had been her second attempt. In her interview she positioned herself as being destined to become an interpreter, referring to it as almost being a calling in life, and connecting the profession to her early love of languages. Like Maria she was very communicative and talked at length whenever I asked her a question. Considering that both she and Federico were evidently intending to be participants together in the research, I concluded that she was a good candidate.

Date: 4/12/2012

Time: 18.15

Place: Talking to Silvia and Federico after interview at cafe

After Silvia's interview Federico was still standing outside the door so I invited them both to have a coffee with me at café Forli. They looked at each other for an instant, perhaps even a little shocked that I would make such an offer. However, they agreed and we went straight there.

After I had ordered 3 espressos at the table outside the café, I felt that they were both a little uneasy about speaking to me. I began by asking them how they were finding their studies at Sslmit and Silvia was immediately very animated in her response, which was very positive. Federico however was a little more subdued, letting her talk at first. Although Silvia said that she was very passionate about English, and saw Sslmit as the perfect place to improve her language skills, she

was worried about reaching the 'right level' by the end of the degree. She also compared her English to other students and positioned herself as being one of the worse students overall. When I asked her why, she said that some of her peers were bi-lingual and spoke like 'mother tongue' English people, while she still had problems with her pronunciation and her grammar. Federico commented that she was very good and described his own English as being far worse than hers sometimes.

From their conversation I realised that their goal of becoming interpreters was based on an understanding that language was the most important thing. I suggested that being an interpreter might require other skills such as an awareness of cultural differences and the ability to manage people in difficult situations. Silvia replied to this however by saying 'yeah, I suppose so' and made no further comment or reflection on what I had said. The conversation slowed down soon after and they both said that they had to meet friends and thanked me for the coffee. I thanked them for allowing me to interview them, said that they had talked about some very interesting things, and that I would be in contact soon to let them know if they would be in the rest of the research. They thanked me again and left.

Date: 5/12/2012

Time: 11.00

Place: Classroom, First interview with Giulia

Giulia arrived late to the interview and apologised. When I started to record her she immediately became very nervous and kept looking at my ipad (obviously very aware that she was being recorded). I tried to calm her down by saying 'just relax and think of this as a little chat' but she appeared to be unable to do this. Sometimes her face appeared to flush red as though she were embarrassed, although my questions were never personal. By the end of the interview I concluded that she was too self-conscious to be part of the cohort.

Date: 6/12/2012

Time: 11.30

Place: Classroom, First interview with Stefania

Stefania appeared to have a nervous tick, which emerged as a loud clicking of her tongue throughout the interview. I did not point this out to her, but decided that she would be unsuitable for extended recordings and group work which might distract other participants.

Date: 7/12/2012

Time: 11.00

Place: Classroom, First interview with Rosa

Rosa had already approached me after the first class presentation of the research (see above) where she asked me if non-Italians could volunteer. In the interview she talked about her experiences of coming to Italy from Iran and her very different learning experiences there. She talked about Italians in the institution as being quite different from herself and appeared to present an outsider's perspective on the institution in general. She listened carefully to my questions and answered them in an extended manner, with little need for me to intervene to clarify or direct her. I therefore decided that she would make a very interesting candidate for the research, potentially highlighting aspects of the institution that might be taken for granted by other 'Italian' participants.

Date: 7/12/2012

Time: 12.30

Place: Classroom, First interview with Anna

Anna did not appear to always understand my questions, and began talking about things I had not asked her, until I had to point out that she was talking about something completely different from my original question. She appeared nervous

and agitated in the interview. I therefore decided that she would not be a suitable candidate.

Date: 7/12/2012

Time: 16.00

Place: Classroom, First interview with Giorgio

Giorgio was the same student who had approached me in the second class presentation of the research on the 10/10 (see above, p.704). In the interview his manner of speech was very short and clipped and he did not seem to engage well with my questions, talking about things that had little to do with the institution and his studies (which were my focus) and continuing for extended periods of time to recount things that had no bearing on my initial questions. By the end of the interview I had difficulty recalling anything of interest, and was very tired and disinterested by the whole experience. I therefore did not consider him as a good candidate for the research.

Date: 14/12/2012

Time: 14.00

Place: Classroom, First interview with Francesca

Francesca talked in a very loud voice, perhaps as a consequence of feeling nervous. However, this was sustained for the whole interview and made it very difficult for me to relax in her company. From the perspective of a group interview I suspected that she might be too dominant and potentially intimidate the other participants by shouting them down. I therefore decided that she was not a suitable candidate.

Date: 21/2/2013

Time: 17.00

Place: Classroom, First workshop interview

I was very nervous initially that the students I had chosen to be my cohort, based on their first one-to-one interviews (see above), might not work well together as a group. My principal concern was that one or two students might dominate the whole interview and the others might not engage at all. However, perhaps because of the evident friendship between some of them, specifically between Maria, Silvia and Federico (whom I had regularly observed together in the cafes and bars of the town) there was a much more balanced exchange of views in our discussions. Matteo also expressed his opinions very often, perhaps because of his maturity (being older than the rest and having already completed a degree). Rosa however appeared to engage less, perhaps because she was not Italian and felt a little bit of an outsider. This led me to elicit her opinion a little more in the interview, especially when she had been quiet for a long time.

Around half way through the interview the group became aware of a loud drilling noise coming from the wall, which at times drowned out their voices, causing them to pause and in some cases laugh. I, however, was extremely nervous as I thought they were talking about some very interesting issues that would possibly be inaudible on the recording, as well as wondering how the noise was affecting their thought processes, potentially skewing my data in some way. The source of the noise I subsequently learnt was coming from maintenance work on the floor above but I did not want to interrupt the participants' talk. Fortunately it only lasted for about 10 minutes.

What emerged from the interview was a close connection between Silvia and Maria, where the former appeared to echo much of the latter's thoughts and ideas. Silvia regularly agreed with Maria and did not challenge her directly. Federico on the other hand appeared to often challenge Silvia, and Silvia Federico, in a playful manner, adopting what appeared to be a slightly childish rivalry between the two. Rosa remained mainly impartial although she often challenged Matteo's positioning of the teacher Moscato as being one of the best teacher's in the institution, revealing perhaps a dislike for the teacher in general.

Overall however, there were no instances of serious tensions between the participants and the general atmosphere was amicable. By the end of the interview I thought that some very interesting things had emerged from the discussion and was eager to begin analysing what I had recorded.

Date: 21/2/2013

Time: 19.15

Place: Drinks at a local bar with the group

After the first group interview I asked all the participants if I could buy them a drink at the local café, hoping to gain some more insights into some of the things they had been talking about in the interview. Everyone agreed, apart from Rosa, who said that she had a prior engagement and had to run. I bought everyone a drink to thank them for being in the research and giving up their personal time. When there was a pause in our talk I asked Maria what she had meant by the teacher Moscato being in competition with the other students (something that had emerged in our interview). Maria responded that it was only a joke but when I pressed her she said that all of the teachers at Sslmit were potentially in competition with students when they graduate, as this was the best interpreter's school in Italy. I asked the other students if they thought that this was true, that Sslmit was the best. Silvia was vehement that it was true, telling me about all her friends being amazed that she managed to finally get in, and how proud her parents were. I asked her why Sslmit was considered the best and she talked about the entrance exam, which in her opinion was the hardest of any interpreting school in Italy. Matteo also said that it was undoubtedly the best, and that it was a commonly known fact among students in 'la Sapienza' university in Rome, where he had studied oriental languages previously. Matteo's friends were all described as being impressed that he had made it in, especially as his 'English was not that good' (Matteo's comment).

This conversation with my participants seemed to place Sslmit on a very high pedestal in the academic world in Italy, where students were proud of having being accepted (passing an exam that it seemed was generally considered to be the

hardest among interpreter institutions in Italy). The talk also was notable for how my students appeared to be worried about their language level and meeting the standards that they felt the institution expected, based it seemed partially on the high benchmark set by the entrance Sslmit exam.

Date: 26/2/2013

Time: 21.00

Place: meeting Giorgio and his friends at a pub in the centre of town

In the evening I went to the Irish pub in the centre of town. 'The Abbey' is situated in a quiet courtyard behind the main piazza (Piazza Safi), and outside there are a series of long tables and benches where many students gather in the evening. I was sitting, enjoying a Guinness, when Giorgio walked pass me with a few of his friends. He saw me, stopped and said 'buona sera professore' with a broad smile. I chatted to him for a while. I had not selected Giorgio for the research (see above, p. 713) so I was worried that he might have been offended. I apologised and told him that I was looking for a particular group dynamic in the research and unfortunately he didn't quite suit my target. He asked me if it was because his English wasn't good enough because he knew he still had to improve it a lot, if he ever wanted to become an interpreter one day. I told him that his English was fine and that I was more concerned about how my participants might interact in the group interviews so I needed a particular mix of people. He said that he understood ('Capisco prof') and wished me a pleasant evening.

Giorgio's English could be described as being quite proficient and it was not because of that that I had not selected him (see above again, p.713), it was more to do with his communicative skills and his apparent inability to listen to what was being said to him (at least in the interview I conducted). However, this meeting re-enforced the idea that everything seemed to centre on language competence for students. There appeared to be a continual self-appraisal of their language skills going on, and a continual self-criticism that they are always lacking and needed to be improved greatly.

Date: 6/6/2013

Time: 16.30

Place: Classroom, Second interview with Federico

In my second interview with Federico he talked much more about his teachers' characters, how some were 'scary' and 'strict' (particularly the Russian teachers) and others were very 'nice' (the Slovak teacher). These different characters appeared to have different effects on his study and learning, as he described himself as not daring to go to the Russian classes without doing all his homework whereas with the Slovak teacher he might or might not do everything, as the atmosphere was more relaxed. I noticed how teachers were much more present in his talk about the institution in general, and the role they played in his life.

Date: 6/6/2013

Time: 18.00

Place: Seeing Federico and Silvia in café Forli

After my interview with Federico, I went to café Forli for a coffee. As I entered the café I saw Federico and Silvia at the bar, talking. I tried to catch their eye and I was sure that Federico had seen me enter, however he did not look in my direction. When I was sitting outside drinking, they both came out and were directly in front of me. I smiled in their direction but they turned sharply and walked back towards the institution. I was sure that they had been aware of my presence but for some reason they did not want to engage with me. I thought I had might have done something to offend one or the other, but I couldn't think of anything. The interview with Federico had gone well, I was sure, we had chatted and even laughed and there was no discernible tension between us. However, somehow I felt that I had been ignored for some reason. This episode contrasted greatly with my encounters with both Federico and Silvia in the first term where they would always stop to chat or say hello when we met in the street, or in the institution. Something had changed in our relationship, which made me feel like an outsider, a stranger.

Date: 7/6/2013

Time: 17.00

Place: Classroom, Second interview with Maria

Maria was much more critical about her teachers in her second interview. In particular she talked about rivalry between some teachers who shared courses, and 'childish' behaviour (where one teacher didn't want to work with another), which threatened her potential to get good exam marks and a good degree. Her maturity as a student seemed to be a central concern in her talk, reprimanding some teachers for not being strict enough with her fellow students and wasting time on weaker students when language goals (corresponding to 'interpreter levels', which she had set) were not being met. Maria also positioned teachers as treating her like an adolescent and not 'a grown up woman', checking her work continuously to see that she had done it.

What was noticeable then was Maria's central preoccupation with issues of 'maturity', positioning herself continually as being more mature than her teachers and her peers.

Date: 8/6/2013

Time: 12.00

Place: Classroom, Second interview with Silvia

Silvia's second interview saw a much greater emphasis on her personal development, how she had changed over her first year in the institution. There was much less interest in her professional goals and her learning than in her first interview, and much more about human relations, in particular with all the new friends she had made who had made her 'realise' things about herself that she hadn't been aware of.

Whereas in the first interview she appeared to want to impress me much more with her 'dream' of becoming an interpreter and her 'passion' for languages,

which had shaped her life. In the second interview she appeared to be much less inclined to impress me with these things, she didn't know if she wanted to become an interpreter now, and she was just getting on (living for today) and studying her languages.

Date: 9/6/2013

Time: 15.00

Place: Classroom, Second interview with Rosa

Rosa appeared to be much less engaged in her second interview. I got the impression that she didn't really want to talk about the institution or her life there any more. There were much longer pauses in her talk, where she appeared to have nothing to say, and the atmosphere was much more tense than in the first interview. At times I felt that I had to drag her thoughts out of her. This might have been connected to her confusion about her future, which emerged in the interview. She appeared despondent about never becoming an interpreter as she 'wasn't bi-lingual', like some of the students, and her Italian would never be as good as the majority of her native speaking peers.

Date: 15/6/2013

Time: 11.00

Place: Classroom, Second interview with Matteo

Matteo criticised his teachers much more in his second interview. His criticism however was not directed so much at individual teachers but at the different language departments, and their different ways of teaching and testing students. Matteo described the English department as not being as 'organised' as the German department, and the English department as not respecting university rules and regulations with regard to re-taking exams (the latter denying students' their 'rights'). Matteo positioned the institution itself as being 'confused' and allowing teachers too much power over their students. All of this was in contrast to Matteo's positioning of teachers in the first interview, where they were in close

‘contact’ with students. By the second interview, teachers appeared to be much more outsiders (at times threatening), not part of a close community with students. This observation made me reflect on how I had felt an outsider myself when Federico and Silvia ignored me at café Forlì. Was this a symptom of a greater distance between students and teachers, developing more in the second term? And what relevancies might this have for my research?

Date: 15/6/2013

Time: 12.15

Place: Talking to Matteo in café Forlì

After my interview with Matteo I invited him for a coffee. I commented that he appeared to be more stressed than last term. He smiled and said that he just couldn’t wait to go on his Erasmus placement, to get away from Forlì. I asked him why he needed to get away and he responded that he was tired of struggling with his teachers and felt that they didn’t understand him sometimes and frustrated him. When I asked him to clarify what he meant by that, he said that they didn’t appreciate how much work he put into his studies and took it for granted, always expecting more and more, and that they always thought that their subject was more important than any other. Matteo wanted to take a break from the pressure he was under and come back refreshed for his final year.

I remembered Matteo in his first term, when he appeared more convinced about his future as an interpreter and how now he seemed overcome by his workload, which he portrayed as being excessive, unappreciated by teachers, and without a clear objective anymore.

Date: 19/6/2013

Time: 16.30

Place: Classroom, Second workshop interview

In the last group interview most of the talk was about teachers. From the very beginning to the end, my participants talked about individual teachers, language

departments, and their relationship with them and the institution in general. Nearly all the comments made appeared to be critical of all of these. I got the distinct impression that there was an 'us' (students), and a 'them' (teachers), with no sense of a shared community.

Date: 19/6/2013

Time: 19.00

Place: Drinks at café Forli

After our last group interview I invited the whole group for drinks at café Forli, to thank them for taking part in my research.

When we were sitting outside, at a big table, I asked them what they thought about taking part in the research. Silvia said that it was very interesting and that she thought it was like going to the psychiatrist and telling him your problems and being listened to. She thought that these chats should be organised more often, for all the students to get things off their chest, and explore their problems in Sslmit. Maria and Matteo agreed. Federico said that he had enjoyed it too, spitting out all his 'venom' about Sslmit. I asked them if they still wanted to be interpreters and only Maria said 'yes of course', Matteo laughed and said 'yes, I think so' and Silvia said 'well, we will see'. Matteo then said that the teachers and the institution put 'too much pressure on students' and that 'they're never happy'. There was a general nodding of heads and a few 'yeah's. Federico said that he knew that he was in the best school in Italy, but asked what can they expect students to do in 'only three years'. Maria agreed and said that they would only become interpreters when they live in the countries and learn about the culture, and that takes a lot of time. We finished our drinks and said our goodbyes, wishing each other a great Summer. I said, I hope you all come back refreshed, and they laughed.

What emerged from this conversation was a deep sense of frustration among the students. They all appeared to be under pressure (by their teachers and the institution) to do their best but there was a sense that they didn't know what that exactly meant. Learning their respective languages appeared paramount but there

was a sense that that could only be done elsewhere (in the foreign country where it was spoken). Matteo's desire to go to Germany on Erasmus was perhaps a desire to 'really' learn the language, just as much as escaping his teachers and the institution, which perhaps were asking him to do *the impossible*. He needed to speak 'perfect German' (to become an interpreter) but he felt that he didn't have enough time or opportunity to do so.

APPENDIX C

SERVICES

Public Relations Office (URP)

The mission of this office is that of favouring the relations with the University through direct contact at the front office or through the call centre and e-mail service. The office promotes and encourages information and communications activities mainly addressed to students, providing for general information and analysing user needs.

P.le Solieri 1, Forlì Ph. +39 0543-374800 urp.forli@unibo.it Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri: 9.00-12.00 | Tue, Thu: 14.30-17.00 www.unibo.it/urpforli

Guidance Office

The office supports the student in the selection of study programmes and in the ongoing evaluation of the programme undertaken. The Office offers welcoming tutors to help the student in getting acquainted with the university system and environment. It offers consultancy and advice to newly graduated students in the shift from the University to the job market through individual interviews. To book an appointment, please visit the Website www.orientaonline.unibo.it

P.le Solieri 1, Forlì Ph. +39 0543-374860 orientamento.fc@unibo.it

Internship and Placement Services

These services offer to students and recent graduates the guidance and administrative support required to carry out internships or job placements, and develop relations with private companies to encourage the entry of graduates into the job market. For further information, please consult the Website of your degree programme to identify the relevant Internship and Placement Office.

Student Administration Office

This Office executes and implements all the administrative procedures and best practices related to the university career, from first year enrolment to graduation, through its help desk open to the public.

P.le Solieri 1, Forlì Ph. +39 0543-374809 segforli@unibo.it Online services
<https://studenti.unibo.it> Mon, Tue, Fri: 9.00-11.15 | Wed: 9.00– 12.00 | Tue, Thu: 14.30-15.30

University e-mail address

All students enrolled at the University of Bologna have a university e-mail address, which is automatically generated when enrolling in the first year. The e-mail address has the following domain and format: name.lastname@studio.unibo.it. The university e-mail is the main channel for all communications between the University and the student, both for general information and for specific needs.

Degree Programme Secretariats

These Secretariats represent the core information point for students, both prospective and enrolled. They provide for help and assistance in the compiling of your study plan and for the assessment of the prerequisites; they offer guidance and advice about the university system and the degree programme regulations, admission tests for the School programmes, career monitoring and analysis, career reconstruction and credit recognition.

The Tutors

The tutors work with the degree programme secretariats and deal with the activities of support to the services addressed to students; they provide guidance and information to newly enrolled students and to past-year students.

Contacts:

School of Economics, Management and Statistics Ph. +39 0543 374673 Fax: +39 0543 374660 E-mail: ems.fo.studenti@unibo.it

School of Engineering and Architecture Ph.: +39 0543 374401 Fax: +39 0543 374477 E-mail: ingarc.vpce.segrdidattica-fo@unibo.it

School of Languages and Literatures, Translation and Interpreting Ph. +39 0543 374505 E-mail: segreteria.didattica@sslmit.unibo.it

School of Political Sciences Ph.: +39 0543 374100 Fax: Ph. +39 0543 374078 E-mail: info.spfo@unibo.it

Services for disabled and dyslexic students

These services are mainly addressed to students with disabilities and with physical difficulties at the entry into the University and provide them with support during their entire study career, with the objective of identifying and designing the kind of aid or support required to allow them to successfully attend and complete their study programmes.

Each School appoints a person to whom the disabled or physically impaired student can apply for his/her special needs.

Disabled Student Service

University of Bologna Via Ranzani 14 400127 - Bologna - Italy Ph.: +39 051 2095941 Ph.: +39 051 2095942 Fax: +39 051 2086164 Mon to Thu: 9.00-13.00; 14.00-16.30| Fri: 9.00-13.00; 14.00-15.30